THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

A Scheme to Reform the Church Assembly.

There is a growing feeling that the Church Assembly is not really representative of the National Church. An impressive example of the growth of this feeling of dissatisfaction with the unrepresentative character of the Assembly was recently seen in Canon C. E. Raven's dramatic refusal to accept nomination in the recent Proctorial election at Liverpool. He declined on the grounds that the Church Assembly is very seriously overweighted by the Bishops and their official *entourage* and that the parochial clergy were not getting their due representation.

> He felt that the only way he could protest was by withdrawing himself. His experience of the Assembly during the last two years had convinced him that unless drastic steps were taken to prevent the centralizing tendency at work in it, and unless they were prepared to send from a diocese like that of Liverpool and from other dioceses men who were not heavily involved in the centralized work of the diocese and the Church, the Church Assembly would lose, if it had not already lost it, the confidence of the vast majority of the clergy of the country. That would mean that the whole work of the Enabling Act would go for nothing. He felt that there was need for an almost clean sweep of the existing members of the Assembly. It might not be their fault, but he felt they had let the credit of the Assembly get to a very low ebb indeed, and he suggested that the only thing they could do was to send fresh men to represent them in it.

If the representation of the rank and file of the clergy be inadequate—and there is not a little to be said for Canon Raven's view—the representation of the laity is in far worse case. The parochial clergy elect their representatives, and they know their

representatives personally in most cases, and are cognisant of their views and of their claims to be their representatives. They would, quite naturally, like their representatives to be more numerous and to carry more weight in the Assembly—but at least they are their representatives. In the case of the lay members of the Assembly, it is almost grotesque to regard them as the elected representatives of the laity.

The reasons for their unrepresentative character are obvious. In 1930 the rolls of the parochial electors of the National Church contained 3,655,630 names. This is one-seventh of the English Parliamentary electors. We cannot tell, as there is no religious census in this country, what is the precise number of Church of England members, but inasmuch as seventy-five of every hundred children born in England are baptized in the Church of England, we may assume with some confidence that the Church comprises three-fourths of the population. In that case over four-fifths of our Church members are unenrolled. Of those enrolled probably less than a quarter take part in the election of the lay representatives, and then only indirectly. The method of electing lay representatives has been aptly compared by the present Mayor of Westminster to that which prevailed in that least democratic of States, the Venetian Republic. Hence it is not surprising that the laity in the Church Assembly are unrepresentative of the rank and file of the parochial laity.

The laymen of the Assembly are in many cases excellent men—in fact, too excellent. They are much too 'Churchy,' much too ecclesiastically-minded, much too idealist, much too subservient to the Bishops, to represent their brethren. They may be—indeed we think they are—what every parish priest would desire his laity to be, but most plainly they bear very little likeness to what his laity are.

Would the Church be well-advised to abandon the attempt to secure a body of representative laity in its Assembly? J. S. Mill, the classical exponent of the principles of Representative Government, would most certainly find no justification for the continuance of our present electoral system. It fails in every way to fulfil the necessary conditions as he expounded them:

> (1) That the people [as a whole and not a mere fraction] should be willing to receive it; (2) that they should be willing and able to do

what is necessary for its preservation; (3) that they should be willing and able to fulfil the duties and discharge the functions which it imposes on them.

And he adds that:

(1) Indifference or inability to understand its processes and requirements is as fatal as actual aversion; (2) representative institutions must depend for their permanency on the readiness of the people to fight for them in case of their being endangered; (3) representative institutions are of little value, and may be a mere instrument of tyranny or intrigue, when the generality of electors are not sufficiently interested in their own government to give their vote, or, if they vote at all, bestow their suffrage at the beck of someone who has control over them, or whom, for private reasons, they desire to propitiate.

In the House of Commons we see our laity as we know them with all their virtues and limitations, their practical good sense and their prejudices, their deep regard for the real Christian thing, their general indifference to institutional Christianity, and their deep dislike of sacerdotalism, sacramentalism, theological dogmatism and ecclesiastical discipline. Four-fifths of our parochial laity are like that. That is one reason why they do not attend church. These are the laity we need to have in the Church Assembly if it is to be representative of the laity. But how are we to get them there? The recommendations of the Committee on Church Electoral Rolls will avail little to improve the situation. To talk of doing it by enlarging our parochial rolls, by arousing more interest in parochial and ruri-decanal elections, is useless. We cannot get these representative laity into the Church Assembly by this means.

We venture to propose an entirely different way of securing a body of representative laity in the Church Assembly. Give all members of the House of Commons, who claim to be Churchmen, the right to sit in the House of Laymen in the Church Assembly, and let the House of Lords be empowered to elect to the Assembly as many lay peers, being Churchmen, as there are Bishops in their House. This proposal, if adopted, would end the farce of the present lay elections to the Assembly and give us a body of really representative laymen where they are greatly needed. Such an addition to its ranks would help to cure the Assembly of many of the notable weaknesses from which it is suffering to-day.

MUCH ADO AND LITTLE DONE.

All who desire Christian unity will be glad to learn from the recently issued report of the Joint Doctrinal Commission of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches that an advance has been made in the matter of doctrinal agreement. Intercommunion between these bodies has not yet been consummated, although it has been discussed on and off by them since the days of the Patriarch, Cyril Lucar, a contemporary of Charles I.

As we know quite well from their formularies the doctrinal position of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, so they know quite well what ours is; it is therefore a little difficult to see the purpose served by this Joint Commission. The Eastern Orthodox Churches know quite well whether we are sufficiently orthodox to make them willing to admit our communicants to their altars, and we know quite well whether we regard them as sufficiently orthodox to allow their communicants to receive the Holy Communion should they so desire in our churches. In fact, it is well known that we are perfectly willing to admit them. They, however, seem to hesitate to admit our communicants.

The obsession that precise doctrinal agreement is necessary to inter-communion between Christian bodies is one to which the archaic Eastern world still clings, although the modern Western mind is rapidly discarding it. *Amo*, not *credo*; love Divine and human is the real basis for inter-communion. Agreement in theological subtleties is a very meagre and superficial basis for it.

All that is required in the way of doctrinal agreement is that it should be sufficient to enable those who would communicate together to use the same service, and of that agreement the individuals who are to communicate together may be reasonably held to be the best judges.

For the purpose of registering important agreements and differences of their respective Churches the Commission discussed the following six points.

> (1) The Christian Revelation; (2) Scripture and Tradition; (3) The Creed of the Church; (4) The doctrine of the Holy Spirit; (5) The variety of customs and usages in the Church; (6) Certain questions regarding the Sacraments.

The results may be summarized as follows:

> Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that

whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith.

Everything necessary for salvation can be founded upon Holy Scripture as completed, explained, interpreted, and understood in the Holy Tradition, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit residing in the Church.

We agree that by Holy Tradition we mean the truths which came down from Our Lord and the Apostles through the Fathers, which are confessed unanimously and continuously in the Undivided Church, and are taught by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We agree that nothing contained in Tradition is contrary to the Scriptures. Though these two may be logically defined and distinguished, yet they cannot be separated from each other nor from the Church.

We agree in accepting as the Creed of the Catholic Church that which is sometimes called the Nicene, sometimes the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan, which was put forth by the Council of Chalcedon and has been accepted by the whole Catholic Church.

It is not unlawful for the several Churches to use as their Baptismal Creed some other Creed agreeable to the Tradition of the Church, as in the Western Church that which is called the Apostles' Creed.

On the difference which has prevailed between the East and the West concerning the doctrine of the Holy Spirit we record the propositions adopted by the Conference held at Bonn in the year 1875. While we reject every proposition or form of expression which implies the existence of two principles or ἀρχαί or αἰτίαι in the Holy Trinity, we consider as acceptable the teaching of St. John of Damascus and of earlier Greek Fathers that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father through the Son.

We agree with St. Augustine that every Christian should accept the customs and usages of the Church to which he belongs.

We agree that with regard to the manner of celebration of Sacraments a variety of custom and rite is acceptable, provided that the things essential to the Sacrament are preserved.

We recognize that this is a serious effort to harmonize English Reformed theology with the traditional dogma of the Greek Church, which knows nothing of the Protestant Reformation. Stout Protestants may feel that our English representatives have given the reformed position away in some cases. This hardly matters. The document has no binding value; it is merely a *pourparler*. What, however, strikes us is the archaic atmosphere in which it all moves. Of course, as believers in Christian freedom we are glad that the Joint Commission is able to declare that, 'We agree that with regard to the manner of celebration of Sacraments a variety of custom and rite is acceptable, provided that the things essential to the Sacrament are preserved.' But it seems rather late in the day to be saying this. To concede that 'It is not unlawful for the several Churches to

use as their Baptismal Creed some other Creed than our Nicene Creed agreeable to the Tradition of the Church,' when we know the varieties which have existed in Baptismal Creeds since the beginning, and that the Nicene Creed, so called, is a fourth century composition, seems hardly necessary.

It is interesting for those who know the points at issue in the controversy of the Single Procession *versus* the Double Procession of the Holy Spirit to be informed that the Orthodox Eastern representatives find themselves able to agree with the statement that 'the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father through the Son,' but seeing that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Divine Father in an infinite number of ways, the fight between the Single Processionists and the Double Processionists must seem to-day to be almost solemn trifling. It is the air of unreality and remoteness from modern ways of thinking and feeling which strikes us most in the report of the Joint Doctrinal Commission. Try to talk to any ordinary educated modern man about it and he will say that it means no more to him than the difference between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. The Church has too many modern problems to concern itself with these ancient wrangles. The Christian attitude of the modern man is represented by a recent declaration of faith attributed to Henry Ford:

> 'I believe in God and in Jesus Christ. I was brought up in the church. I attend church. I never go to hear a sermon, whether it is by a preacher in a small church or a large one, from which I do not get help.
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> 'Religion is like electricity. I do not understand electricity, but I am deeply interested in it. I want to know all I can about it. I know that it warms our hearts and that it makes the world better. I know that it lights up the dark places of the earth. I see and admit its effectiveness even though I do not profess to understand it at all.'

The Orthodox Eastern Churches have lived for centuries past in the backwaters of Oriental apathy and conservatism—strong indeed to suffer, but incapable of development and adaptation to environment. If their closer relations to the English communion will inspire and energize them, we are glad that they should come into closer relations with us; but if it means, as the result of these negotiations, that we are in any degree to be tied to their archaisms, then frankly *le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*. We have duties to a modern world and an unknown future which preclude our shackling ourselves to an effete past.

Church Patronage Facts *versus* Church Patronage Theories.

The recent *Times* correspondence on Church Patronage, contributed to by Lord Wolmer, Lord Brentford, Bishop Henson, Prebendary Eardley-Wilmot, and Bishop Knox, provides interesting reading for those who have a *penchant* for ecclesiastical controversy.

The Evangelicals by means of patronage trusts, the oldest of which was instituted by the Evangelical saint, Charles Simeon, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, before the rise of Anglo-Catholicism, have secured for their party the administration of a considerable amount of important Church patronage. By this means they have checked the appointment of Anglo-Catholic clergymen in certain large centres of population. The Anglo-Catholics are naturally desirous of depriving their rivals of this tactical advantage, particularly as the Evangelicals have seized the opportunity, created by the recent Church Assembly measures dealing with patronage, to add very considerably to their possessions. The Anglo-Catholics are now working for legislation which will abolish the Evangelical patronage trusts. At first sight the Evangelical position in this matter appears very vulnerable, and the Bishop of Durham, who has a fine eye for the weaknesses in his opponents' position, attacked with vigour the scandal of 'a great block of patronage divorced from parochial connexions and diocesan responsibilities, tied and bound to an obsolete type of Churchmanship.' He claimed that it 'does unquestionably obstruct the salutary influences, intellectual and religious, which bear on the English clergy, and dangles before the eyes of indigent Protestants a material reason for persisting in prejudices which they would normally outgrow.'

Bishop Knox's reply, in the *Times* of December 19th, indicates that although theoretically Evangelical Patronage Trusts are open to objection, yet they justify themselves practically. Dr. Knox wrote:

> 'I once had the curiosity to test, by statistical inquiry into contributions to foreign missions, the comparative efficiency of trust and episcopal patronage of benefices. The result was wholly in favour of trust patronage.

> I would suggest that the Church Assembly should call for an inquiry into trust patronage tested by baptisms, confirmations, communicants, numbers on parochial rolls, Sunday scholars, Bible class members, collections for home and foreign missions, and Diocesan and Central Fund contributions. Given correct lists of benefices in trust funds, the inquiry would not be difficult. It might be very illuminating, and certainly more valuable than outbursts of moral indignation, in which nomination to a benefice is often confused with institution. The patron nominates to a benefice, but the responsibility of instituting the person nominated rests with the Bishop, who can, for certain reasons, simony included, refuse institution.
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> In any case, definite facts would be before the Assembly instead of phrases. What one man calls "condemnation to a narrow theological system" is to another "freedom from idolatrous worship." Until the Church, which boasts of comprehensiveness, allows her laity in each parish freedom of worship accordant with their beliefs, she must go on with a patronage system admittedly defective. Should she not ascertain, before condemning trust patronage, whether it compares, in results, favourably or unfavourably with other forms of patronage?'

The strength of Edmund Burke's criticism of the authors of 'the Terror of 1793' lay in his appeal to facts, the facts of political experience, as against 'the paper theories' of his opponents. We hope that ecclesiastical idealists will act upon Dr. Knox's challenge and investigate the facts of patronage trusts before they continue their attack. It was a practically-minded Englishman of the same political school as Edmund Burke, who wrote :

> 'For forms of government let fools contest;
> Whate'er is best administered is best.'

Dr. David and In-Law Marriages.

The Bishop of Liverpool, in response to requests for advice as to what line clergymen should take who are asked to solemnize marriages with the sister or brother or niece or nephew of a deceased partner, has given advice which is deplored by the *Church Times*. According to that journal, the Bishop ought to have said that

> 'such unions are prohibited by the law of the Church of which he is a Bishop as being contrary to Divine, and not merely to ecclesiastical, law, and that the celebration in church would be a sacrilege which he could not permit.

It seems quite clear to us that since the law of the land permits such marriages, and gives the parties contracting them the right to be married in their parish church if they can secure a duly qualified clergyman to perform the ceremony, there can be no

doubt as to the propriety of clergymen solemnizing such marriages, although should they do so, such is the strength of ecclesiastical feeling against them, that they will be looked at askance by many of their clerical brethren, and even be privately admonished for their conduct if they have a strong Anglo-Catholic bishop. For the *Church Times* to speak of these marriages as prohibited by Divine law seems to us to be absurd. If by Divine law is meant the Bible, then it is sufficient to say that nothing is said about it in the New Testament. The woman who married the six brothers of her deceased husband is not condemned herself, nor are they, by Jesus in the problem presented to Him for His solution by the Sadducees. What was forbidden by the Mosaic law was to do what Jacob did, namely, to marry the sister of your living wife. If a man in Israel might lawfully marry his niece — see the case of Othniel (*Joshua* xv, 17) — *a fortiori* he might marry the niece of his deceased wife. But surely it is not possible for the modern Christian to regard Old Testament examples and prescriptions as the Divine law unless they have the approval of the rational and moral consciousness of modern Christians. There is no physiological objection to these marriages, and an enlightened rational and moral consciousness does not forbid them. Inasmuch as there is an ecclesiastical prejudice against them, the clergy who solemnize them might be well advised never to accept any fee or gift for doing so, and they ought in their marriage address to point out to those contracting such a marriage why they may contract it with a good conscience and a well-assured faith in the Divine blessing.

We confess that Dr. David's statement, as cited by the *Church Times*, that these marriages ought to be performed in the registrar's office seems to us to lack cogency since the law gives the parties contracting them the right to use the church, and it seems almost superfluous to add that the incumbent will raise no objection if he be convinced that 'the spiritual interests of the parties and of the parish are better served by celebrating the marriage in church.' The *Church Times* adds:

> 'We should like to ask his lordship to explain in what way the spiritual interests of the parties concerned or of the parish can be served by a public breach of what the Church of England teaches to be a Divine ordinance, a breach of which committed by the Papacy in

> the dispensation given for the marriage of Henry VIII to Catherine of Arragon, was held by the leaders of the Reformation to justify the repudiation of Papal authority by our Church?'

The *Church Times* feels it has got our anti-papal prelate transfixed on the horns of a dilemma. But probably Dr. David does not feel bound to accept as permanent authority the decisions of Archbishop Cranmer and the Tudor Reformers on this point.

The student of Westermarck, Müller-Lyer, and our anthropologists and sociologists generally, in their exposition of the evolution of modern marriage, conscious of the liberating tendency of these studies, combined with the realization of the increasing difficulty of preserving the Christian ideal of marriage whether in Soviet Russia or in the United States of America, will make the Bishop, as it does ourselves, disposed to regard the criticism of the *Church Times* as that sort of solemn trifling which weakens the Christian Church in its difficult conflict with scientific Secularism.

A Protest against Liturgical Bad Taste.

It has been the misfortune of our Church that January 1, instead of being liturgically the Festival of the New Year, should be the Feast of the Circumcision. This has been remedied to some extent in the Deposited Book by the addition of a Collect for the New Year and a suitable alternative Epistle. The action of our Church authorities in directing that the first Sunday in 1932 should be especially devoted to national supplication and thanksgiving was happily conceived, but unfortunately it was not so happily arranged in detail. A form of service, of poor literary quality and doubtful taste, was authorized by the Archbishops for optional use on the occasion. The *Times*, in a leading article marked by admirable restraint, took serious exception to the quality of the authorized service in the following terms:

> Any new prayers devised for use on a day of National Intercession should be as noble in their wording as skill and knowledge can make them. This is no mere matter of satisfying aesthetic taste but of consecrating the best of literary, as of musical, art to the service and worship of God. Again, the petitions should be so framed as to correspond with the feelings of those who are to employ them. Worshippers should not be expected collectively to endorse sentiments which individually they repudiate. The special form of service which has been issued by the S.P.C.K. for use on January 3 cannot be said

to be worthy in all respects of the occasion for which it is designed. Some of its new collects, if unexceptionable in what they state and ask, clearly need to be recast by someone with a feeling for English prose, a sense of cadence, rhythm, and euphony. Of the short petitions forming part of the service some are phrased rather in the idiom of political pamphlets — 'by crooked dealing, scamped work, or by exploitation'—while others have the more serious fault of putting into the mouths of worshippers what few of them can believe to be true. Thus we are to ask Divine forgiveness—

> Because we have indulged in national arrogance, finding satisfaction in our power over others rather than in our ability to serve them.

That there have been periods in history when 'national arrogance' was our besetting sin is true enough. But to-day, whatever our faults are, this is not among them. It would really be more to the purpose to ask pardon for our weakness, our diffidence, our lack of courage and self-respect. Other petitions in the form, though not quite on this level, are also open to objection. As the form has been 'authorized for use,' it might be well that it should be officially stated, as no doubt is the intention, that the use is selective and optional, that those who prefer to base their intercessions on the Prayer-book are free to do so, while those clergy who adopt the new form of service may also adapt it by making in it such alterations or omissions as are calculated to bring it into closer relation with the realities of to-day.

This public rebuke was accompanied and followed by the publication of a number of letters. Archdeacon James wrote:

> 'I can hardly believe that such a production has received official sanction. It is not so much the matter as the manner to which I take exception. . . . How can anyone familiar with the language of the Book of Common Prayer have written *for use in public worship* such stuff? . . . Shade of Cranmer! Is there no competent liturgiologist within reach of Lambeth or of York?'

Those who are acquainted with Mr. Milner White's and Dr. Brightman's criticisms of the style of some portions of the Deposited Book will realise what a *rara avis* a competent liturgiologist, who is not merely imitative, is in the Church of England to-day.

Sir Arnold Wilson in condemning the new form of service took occasion to plead for an understanding use, in the compilation of new services, of the rich materials provided by our authorized Book of Common Prayer. It is really remarkable what can be achieved by this means. Mr. Gladstone produced an admirable manual of Family Prayers using only material drawn from the Prayer Book.

Canon Quick, in the spirit of a Modernist pleading for new alternative creeds, wrote an *apologia* for the new service, taking

the line that inasmuch as the service voiced new needs they can only be effectively expressed in a new manner.

> The main issue is not a question of language at all. Whatever be the aesthetic merits of Cranmer's style, the fact remains that ancient prayers are mainly concerned with God's protection and deliverance of His faithful people from spiritual and temporal evil, and hardly contemplate the possibility that the Divine presence and power should be manifested directly in the ordering and guiding of the secular activities of the world's life. If it is this kind of guidance in secular affairs which is to be made the main subject of our thoughts and prayers on the day of intercession, then of necessity new language must be used. . . . No laments for Elizabethan diction can make old prayers express thoughts which their authors never intended. And, moreover, to speak of ordinary and modern realities in studiously noble or Biblical language often invests prayer with just that appearance of complacent conventionality which makes some people despair of 'Church.'

Professor N. P. Williams' reply to Canon Quick's *apologia* is so clear an exposition of the ideal use of our Prayer Book, unenriched and unrevised, that we venture to quote it in full.

> I hope that my friend Canon Quick will forgive me for saying that I have read his statement, that 'ancient prayers' (by which I take those of the Book of Common Prayer to be meant) 'hardly contemplate the possibility that the Divine presence and power should be manifested directly in the ordering and guiding of the secular activities of the world's life,' with astonishment. What, then, is the meaning of such glorious words as these—'whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth'; 'grant that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance'; 'we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men, that thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations'? Surely the prayers already contained in our Liturgy, especially when given a particular application by individual intention, are sufficient to voice the petitions of the Church in any crisis, however grave.
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> Canon Quick would, I gather, urge that the existing liturgical prayers are not adequate to our present necessities because they do not envisage modern problems. But the fundamental problems of humanity are not 'modern'; they are as old as humanity itself; it is merely their accidental clothing and accompaniment which is modern. The essential prayer which we shall offer next Sunday, for deliverance from the standing menace of war, might have been offered in every century since the beginning of Christianity, and indeed doubtless has been, though not with the united fervour generated by the horrors of a World-War.
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> I venture to submit that the theory apparently underlying many modern forms of intercession—namely, that it is necessary to furnish Omniscience with an elaborately detailed statement of present-day economic and political complications—diverges from the Scriptural ideal. 'Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him.' If this be so, it would seem to commend the practice of the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church, who (I believe) very rarely

indeed attempt to compose new and *ad hoc* forms of prayer, contenting themselves, in times of crisis, with prescribing forms of a general character—the Litanies, the *Veni Creator*, the Penitential Psalms, the Mass *pro quacunque tribulatione*—with a special intention. It may not be presumptuous to suggest that the English Church might well follow this example, especially in view of the apparent dearth of literary ability at her disposal (for few will agree with Canon Quick's contention that in public worship literary craftsmanship is a 'secondary matter'—*i.e.* presumably, of less importance than architectural or musical technique). So far as official and corporate worship is concerned, it would seem that our own Litany, the Psalter, many of the Collects, the Prayer for all sorts and conditions of men, and the Holy Communion, including, perhaps, a special Collect, Epistle, and Gospel *pro quacunque tribulatione*, with their meanings sharpened and individualized by a statement of the intention for which their recitation was prescribed, would provide a more than adequate means for bringing our aspirations in the present perplexity before the Throne of Grace.

Many Churchmen will regret that a public protest was necessary, but that it was necessary few can doubt who have noted the liturgical productions put forth with authority during the last quarter of a century. To compose a noble collect is as difficult a matter as to compose a great sonnet, and the people who are responsible for the most appalling liturgical productions are those who think that these things can be done easily or that it does not matter very much how they are done. The Book of Common Prayer is becoming so much neglected in certain Church circles to-day that it is not surprising that there is a fallng off in the verbal proprieties of public worship as educated Englishmen understand them. We may hope that the rebuke by the *Times*' leader will mark the beginning of the recovery of liturgical good taste by our Church authorities.

'THE GROUPS'*

By the Rev. J. S. Bezzant, Fellow of Exeter College and Vice-Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford.

'THE Groups' is the title of a movement neither ecclesiastical nor theological, but simply religious and very evangelistic.[1] The disliked alternative 'Buchmanites' indicates its origin, which was in America. It began with one Frank Buch-

* The matter of this Article appeared in *The Guardian* in the issues of Dec. 11th and 18th. It is reproduced, with additions, with the Editor's permission.

[1] Why 'The *Oxford* Group'? The movement did not originate in Oxford, nor is its centre here.

man, an American Lutheran minister. He was troubled by the knowledge that his religion was not, either in himself or in his preaching, the effective reality which, if its great affirmations were true, it ought to be. One day, through a simple exposition of the meaning of the Cross by an unknown person, there was revealed to him the truth about himself. Therewith he felt the power of Christ. Doubts and hesitations fled. Thenceforward he has devoted himself to sharing his transforming experience with others, hitherto mainly students, with great success. An old story, formerly more familiar than it has since become.

'The Groups' are informal but very real fellowships of those who claim to have known the same experience. At their public meetings, and in the course of their ordinary relations with men, they 'share' their experiences in such manner and measure as they feel inwardly moved or 'guided' to do by the Holy Spirit. They make little attempt to influence people in the mass, but concentrate on individuals. They believe intensely that no one has fully surrendered to Christ until, as the primary duty in life because necessity is laid upon him, he is winning or 'changing' others. It is taken for granted that for such a person there is Divine guidance not only as to whom and how to bear witness for Christ, but no less in such matters as "work, sleep, eating, drinking, recreation and rest." In the Group fellowships there exist the familiar divergences of theological and ecclesiastical tradition, but no attention is paid to them and there are no such tenets peculiar to themselves. They assume, and act upon the assumption, that it is only sin, conscious or unrealized, which can prevent anyone from knowing God, and that whatsoever keeps any one from God and from his fellow-men is sin.

It is now some five years since I first met Frank Buchman. It has now become a tradition to say that he is personally unimpressive, even unattractive. There is an obvious 'aliveness' and sincerity about him, but otherwise I think the tradition is true. From what he told me, I gathered that his method was in general like this. A man with whom he had formed an acquaintance, or who had been introduced to him for the purpose, would be encouraged to talk frankly about himself and his life; he would retail his reasons, often intellectual in form if not in substance, why religion was not a power in his life. These Buchman would

sympathetically and patiently hear. But there would come a moment when he would say quite directly, 'Mr. ——, what is wrong with you is not this at all, but —— (naming some sin of pride, selfishness or indulgence, sometimes but not always sexual), which is spoiling your life and keeping you from God.' That he could do this frequently and with success shows that, if only the least among his other gifts, Buchman has a flair for detecting the sins and weaknesses which hamper people, and a power of 'convicting' them. The hidden or unacknowledged trouble thus brought to light and frankly faced, the Christian Gospel can be instilled with power because the barrier of insincerity which can effectively turn aside every appeal has been removed.

The 'house party' is a prominent feature of the movement. The thing like the name is not much like the ordinary religious conference. A house party may be quite small in membership (which is by invitation) or as large as two hundred or more. It may last from a week-end to about ten days. Its object is, in the words of one of the leaders, "to relate modern individuals to Jesus Christ in terms which they understand." Each morning there is a corporate 'quiet time' in which the mind is concentrated upon God in the conviction that He can and does make known His will to those eager to discover it. There is teaching and discussion about sin, conversion, guidance; members are divided into groups appropriate for the consideration of particular problems, and there is study of the Bible.

I was kindly invited to a large house party last summer, and was able to attend some of the meetings and to share in the hospitality. The gathering included men and women, and in age, intelligence, vocation, social position and means was very varied. Three things impressed me vividly, and have survived subsequent critical reflection. I give them in the order I received them.

(1) Though there was a marked absence of the formal restraint which would have been very natural in such a gathering, there was nothing fanatical. None could have failed to notice the extraordinary friendliness and fellowship, far removed from that painful 'heartiness' and the easy use of such great swelling words as 'service,' 'sacrifice,' 'self-crucifixion,' which often merely cover the absence of the realities, and may be nothing

more than psychological compensation for a life of self-centred individualism. The people at this house party were so varied that one would have expected them to find little in common or to enjoy in each other's company. I have no doubt that the centre of the fellowship was, as must be with all true fellowship, not in any common interest except an experience the centre of which was outside of 'self' and, as they would say, 'in Christ.'

(2) There could be no doubt that here was a company of people whose profession of Christianity was extremely alive and real. To them the great affirmations of God and Christ meant that nothing else was of comparable importance, and they were prepared to act on their conviction. Their spirit and aim can be simply described as just taking one's religion seriously and living it, with a consequent eagerness to attack and remove, not to condemn, the grosser forms of sin and the lethargy of those who perchance once were hot and who have left their first love.

(3) My third impression was one of acute discomfort. How gravely Laodicean our Church life must be when an ever increasing number of people, and outwardly so diverse, have to wait until they make contact with some member of a Buchman Group to find what should flourish and abound wherever the religion of Christ is professed!

I would emphasize these three points heavily for three reasons. First, though efforts of the Group people may often be unavailing, it is more important that they are in a large measure successful; secondly, because I have no doubt that it is in these matters, *and in nothing else*, that the existence of the movement presents a challenge to the Church; thirdly, because they remain unaffected by certain necessary qualifications and criticisms.

It must be added that all associated with this movement insist strongly that there is no intention to detach people from their denominational allegiances. It may tend to have that effect in so far as the Group fellowship seems more living than those of the Churches; but if any thought of separation enters their minds it is as a fear, not as a desire. At those meetings of the house party when people spoke informally as they were moved, nothing was said which might not have been heard at the traditional Prayer—or Testimony-Meetings. Except for differences of language, similar anecdotal testimonies can still be heard from the Salva-

tion Army. Confessions of sin were confined to generalities or to trivialities; there were few details, and no sexual details such as are often supposed to be prominent in them. I felt that either the half was not told, or else that these people were singularly blameless before their conversion. Most of the testimonies were apparently unself-conscious confessions that, though it had been otherwise, life had now become purposeful and contented, centred no longer in self but 'in Christ,' and that the speakers must make known what great things the Lord had done for them, delivering to others that which they had received.

The Group movement now flourishes in many countries. Through its activities, lives on the way to ruin or careless and empty, are being changed into lives consecrated to God, and this in a way hardly known among us since the days of the Wesleyan and Evangelical revivals. Already the transformations have shown a persistence which promises permanence. Now a few of those affected have been led to Holy Orders: more are in preparation. Against this good must be set instances of harm, sometimes serious, done to sensitive people when they have been tackled by Buchman or by Group people, particularly when they have been falsely charged with certain sins. Others are merely repelled by Group methods, which are apt to ignore the fact that for many noble characters personal religious life is not as natural a subject of conversation as sport. It is easy to outrage a reticence which on the whole is good, though no doubt it causes us to miss some of the best opportunities of doing good which ever come our way.

The strength of the movement is also its weakness. Its appeal is too exclusively to what 'works'; its language suggests that concern is too much with a deliverance from the selfish fears and anxieties which beset the human heart. That may be a true beginning, but assuredly it is not enough. The appeal is almost solely to the will: there is little, if any, emphasis on the need of reasoned convictions, and little consciousness of how largely 'experience' is determined by what is already in the mind. Affirmations accepted without reflection would 'work' even though they concerned only imaginal objects and had no realities corresponding to them. The frame of mind dominating the Groups is what I may call psychological certitude or convincedness, the

basis of which is purely pragmatic rather than a reasonably grounded faith. Religion needs grounding upon reasonable doctrine, which will then keep alive the right sort of experience. Dr. John Oman has recently written, "It was a weakness in Evangelicalism, the gravity of which the years have increasingly shown, that it merely dismissed as human perversity the problems of Rationalism."[2] The mentality of the Groups, as it is at present, tends to reproduce that weakness, though there is no reason why they should not overcome it.

Again, it is hard not to feel that, as a result of sudden conversion or the quickening of a conventional religion, many in the Groups have a very superficial sense of the persistence of sin, and are living in a false security. The old man is not easily slain; indeed, he is never so dangerous as when we are deceived into supposing that he is dead. His power of resurrection is well known to the saints, and to age-long normal Christian experience. Group language betrays little consciousness of the fact. Connected with this may be the not always pleasing manner which some Group people manifest towards those who follow not with them; there is a tendency to regard all such as strangers to true religion. The confessed former egoism of some Group people appears to others to have found a new and less attractive expression rather than to have been cast out. They seem unaware of the fact that a vivid psychological experience, interpreted as communion with God, can occur and continue side by side with tolerated moral weakness. It is possible to manifest some of the symptoms and even the temperature of true religion when our real condition is either dangerously near a grave disease of the soul or simply one of self-deception. It is well to look for a more than usual manifestation of the *ordinary* fruits of the spirit before taking at its face value a claim to 'a vital or maximum experience of Jesus Christ.'

Then there are obvious dangers and errors about 'guidance.' Nothing but good can come from a 'quiet time' in the early morning, secured by a discipline of self-denial and spent in prayer and silent waiting upon God. As Dr. Kirk says: "To look towards God, and from that 'look' to acquire insight both into the follies of one's own heart and the needs of one's neigh-

[2] *The Natural and the Supernatural*, p. 11.

bours, with the power to correct the one no less than to serve the other''—this is indeed to know God and His will. But it presupposes knowledge of, and reasonable belief in, God. To move one step in the direction of supposing that in the 'quiet time' God pours impulses and ideas into the mind which must be acted upon, as a test of the sincerity of consecration, ignoring or setting aside what experience or prudence would suggest, is to turn to what is as false as it is dangerous. I am aware that Group leaders give tests by which true 'guidance' is to be known, though they do not seem to me to realize the implications of such tests: personal guidance is to be compared with God's word in the Bible (all of it?), with what others say to whom God speaks, and, though lastly, with the dictates of reason. But there is no doubt that to some this wisdom deprives 'guidance' of its adventure and attractiveness and is often ignored, whereupon foolishness ensues. That God has purposes and that His providence realizes them through human thought and action all Christians believe: it does not follow that we can or ought always to be able to discern them in detail. Religion does not destroy human finitude nor substitute sight for faith. God does not guide men into folly and 'guidance' can only be *known* as His when the issue demonstrates its sanity or value, and when it is reflectively related to reasonable theistic or Christian belief. It suggests the Deuteronomic criterion for knowing the true from the false prophet; he was to be classified according as his prediction turned out true or false. It is a practical test, but it suffers from the defect of being quite useless just when one really wants to know. 'Guidance' is like Infallibility: it is a category in which men may wholeheartedly believe and which, in abstraction, is capable of dialectical defence, but which nevertheless they cannot whole-heartedly use without disaster. That way lies unreality.

Again, the practice of 'sharing' easily degenerates, and has often invited severe criticism. There is little doubt that formerly, and certainly in America, the practice afforded opportunities for the public disclosure of matter unfit for general gatherings, even of one sex. There is no doubt that this evil has been rooted out, and that any such tendency as may now arise meets with prompt suppression from Group leaders. But there are other dangers. One rather trivial confession and testimony made at a Group

meeting I repeated to an Oxford teacher of long experience; he replied that the person concerned had been saying it again and again, in the same words, for more than four years. And the dangers which arise when recognizable confessions find their way into the Press are enough to counterbalance any good they may do as private confidences. Nor can I think the publication in Church newspapers of detailed reports of what is said in this connection at house parties, to be read by thousands who have no inside knowledge, can do very much good.

I would again emphasize that these criticisms do not touch the essentials or the potentialities of the Group movement. Much depends upon future developments. Living things of the spirit are always dangerous: they are safe only when dead. It is not much use pointing to the dangers in this movement when all around are the chaos, evils and emptiness of lives destitute of any sense of the living God, of His guidance and human obedience. If a movement could be rightly judged by its failures and perversions, the defence of Christianity itself would have to be left to the facetious. The chief danger in this movement is lest Group people should be separated from the larger and more varied fellowship of the Churches. It is very important that those who realize its strength and its worth should not turn a blind eye to its limitations: it is equally important that those who see them should not merely indulge in superior criticism from outside.

But the Church sorely needs more intelligence as well as more devotion; more light as well as heat. Some there are who criticize the Group movement on the ground that participation in it is equally possible for one who thinks of Jesus only as the teacher of a way of life as for one who holds the doctrine of the Incarnation. It is even so; and the statement could be broadened. But it is not sound criticism. Indeed, it is greatly to the credit of the movement that it has realized the folly, in the modern world, of making the greatest demands of Christian belief at a stage when faith is scarcely born. Those who hold the Christian faith to be true ought not to protest if others can be led to know the fruits of acting *as if* it, or a part of it, were true. Such a protest comes better from unbelievers. None the less, from the standpoint of *reflection upon experience*, which alone yields knowledge or reasonable belief such as may be distinguished from error or credu-

lity, the frequent statement that Christianity is a life, not a doctrine, must be repudiated as a half-truth. Christianity is 'neither a doctrine nor a life, but a life coloured by a doctrine.' And when the power and fruits of the Group movement are claimed as proving the truth of Christianity, the theologian must reject the claim. They prove only that Christian affirmations can arouse strong emotions, evoke certitude and control conduct provided that belief in their reality is entertained. To claim more is to confound psychology with theology, uncritically induced certitude with reasonable belief. Power to produce pious life is one thing: the reality or existential truth of what the efficacious doctrine asserts is another. Faith affirms such reality; but it may legitimately do so only as long as reasonable belief, or knowledge, leaves the way open; otherwise faith is confounded with credulity. It is true that faith underlies all progress in the only kind of knowledge possible to man; but we must be in earnest with that truth. If we are, we shall recognize that the faith at the basis of all knowledge is not different in nature from the faith at the basis of religious knowledge, though methods of verification differ.[3] We are bidden to go to experience: to experience let us go; only it must be to experience in general and not only to certain elements arbitrarily extracted from it. Vivid and effective psychological experience, consequent upon trust in affirmations not yet doubt-sifted, cannot in itself prove those affirmations to be more than imaginal or ideal. For the Groups to interpret their experience as religious, still more as Christian, they must have grounds for belief in God and in Christ as now living, and reasons why these ideas differ from erroneous ideas in having a Real counterpart.

At Group meetings and house parties the power of suggestion is enormous. Most of those who attend wish to believe, to be rid of doubt and perplexity, anxiety and sin. That they find satisfaction and peace becomes a cause of future believing. The convinced Christian will rejoice. But when Group people go on to claim, as many do, that the truth of Christianity is proved by

[3] I am not suggesting that Christianity need concern itself overmuch with metaphysic of the *a priori* sort. It will do well to regard the philosophy (whatever its self-consistency) which attempts to set out and to deduce knowledge from thought-created entities as belonging, as Dr. Tennant says, rather to the sphere of imaginative art than to the business-like pursuit of knowledge.

their experience, that their experience is an adequate basis for theology, or that theology is superfluous, it is necessary to insist that their experience may have *causes*, but it has no *grounds*, unless the Christian tradition can be justified on broader and more important grounds than their experience. The value of the movement will be largely destroyed if it encourages obscurantism. There is no reason why it should do so. It is largely free from inherited prejudices. Group people are not at all resentful of criticism, though their fear lest discussion should take the place of decision naturally disinclines them to answer it.

As for the personal challenge which the movement makes to each individual, a direct acquaintance with it, sought with resolution not to be offended by its mannerisms, will be far more effective than anything I can write. Two truths it has firmly grasped. First, that it is in the individual human soul that Christianity must establish its strength and its inspiration if it is to have any effective measure of either. Secondly, that discursive knowledge, whether obscurantist or scientific, about religion or Christianity is one thing and a consecrated Christian life another; and that there is no point in the growth of the one at which it necessarily becomes the other. It realizes that faith involves decision and surrender. Those whose Christian conviction rests upon reasonable belief in the truth of the basic affirmations of Christianity can only rejoice at the converting and missionary power of the movement. When the best that can be said of our Church life has been said, it remains true that but for the remnant of faithful laity whom nothing will alienate, the Church in many parishes is well-nigh dead; in many others the work is done with loyal and patient resignation rather than with enthusiasm. We are busy with administrative machinery, finance, prestige, controversy, 'spiritual independence.' It may all be necessary, but with it all one would expect to see the Church's mission marching on. Yet is there any visible increase in the living membership of the Church, or in the influence of Christianity upon our national life, in return for all the bustle? The Church has nothing new to learn from the Groups; but their existence is a warning to the Church lest the substitution of other activities for her essential work may lead to the removal of her candlestick.

THE MOST UNCHRISTIAN ACT

By Claud Mullins, Magistrate at North London Police Court.

IN the December number of the *Modern Churchman* the editor wrote of 'the millions of disgruntled and distrustful Churchmen who are resolved to do nothing to help the Church.' The context was the Deposited Prayer Book and the present eagerness of many of the clergy to introduce practices and ideas that were set aside at the Reformation. I have never been able to feel much interest in this subject, but for many years past I have pondered over another reason for the existence of 'millions of disgruntled and distrustful' Christians of all denominations, and that reason is the refusal of all the Christian Churches to face what, to me at any rate, is the bedrock social and religious problem of the day.

All around us we see magnificent Christian effort directed to the relief of the suffering, the assistance of the needy, the improvement of environment, and so on. At no time and in no country has there ever been a greater determination to do what is possible in these directions than in the England of to-day. Whether the workers are avowed Christians or not, whether they be organized in Churches or not, the big fact is that the impulse is Christian. Those who have lived in non-Christian lands must have seen and felt the contrast. A year's residence in India taught me something of the untold blessings that the teaching of Christ has given to mankind. The Hindu, for instance, lacks, because of his religious outlook, that Divine urge to help and improve which is manifest where the Christian standard is accepted.

But without intending any ingratitude for this splendid Christian activity, I confess that my joy at seeing the good work done is tempered by a feeling of sadness. The Christian urge is absorbed in patching. Very little thought is given to preventing. The one problem that Christians engaged in social work will not face is how to prevent an indefinite repetition of the circumstances which they are labouring to improve. The few who do think of prevention usually turn to politics. They dump all our

troubles at the feet of what they call Capitalism, and convince themselves that political changes will automatically result in preventing a recurrence of what is horrible in the conditions of to-day. For years I have been convinced that this is a delusion. Like most of us, I long for some political changes, but I also deplore some others that have already been made. I have long ceased to believe that in any political change lies our hope of salvation.

There can be no prevention of a repetition of the social evils of to-day until Christians realize the need of studying all the social problems that surround the creation of human life. So long as the Christian community continues to assume that the giving of birth is some automatic process, and that any conscious efforts to control that process are but a wrongful interference with the working of God's laws, so long will the evils of the day continue—and so long will there be many 'disgruntled and distrustful' Christians outside all the Churches.

To take one example only: In many parts of London to-day, notably in St. Pancras under the leadership of Father Jellicoe, ardent Christians are doing wonderful work in tackling the slum problem by building model dwellings. 'Help us to conquer overcrowding' is their appeal. But how can over-crowding be conquered unless the people to be helped are taught that the number of their children is a matter within their own control? I make bold to say that the most un-Christian act men and women can commit is to bring into the world a child for whom they can make no provision or who is not likely to have a fair chance in life. Just think what social problems would be solved if among the poorer classes it could be universally realized that (1) the number and times of child-births are matters within human control, and (2) it is un-Christian to have a larger family than the parents can bring up properly. The average married couple of the better-educated classes acts on both these assumptions, but very often the very people who do so, seem to think that there is something wrong in teaching the manual workers to do the same. Yet few parents who are overwhelmed economically by the size of their families wanted to have so many children. The children in most cases just happened. I cannot see the hand of God in such circumstances, and only too often I see, as magistrate, parents

driven to disaster by the size of their families who with two or three children would have had normal, happy homes.

To-day Roman Catholics and Anglo-Catholics set their faces against the teaching and practice of Birth Control by contraceptive means. Modernists, happily, are usually prepared to tolerate contraception, but I should like to see them go a good deal further. To their lasting credit let us remember that the subject was openly discussed at the Modern Churchmen's Conference in 1930, and that Modernists are responsible for the publication of Dr. Helena Wright's pamphlet on 'Marriage.' In this excellent pamphlet Dr. Wright says :

> 'There is no logic or common-sense in the opinion which says that because the sex act can result in a child, therefore it always shall. God has given us minds and the powers of judgment and selection in order that we shall use them . . . In a few more generations the idea of having more children than a family can support will be considered just as savage as we now think the deliberate murder of unwanted babies, a custom which has been held to be right and permissible in the early stages of many civilizations.'

A few enlightened leaders in the Anglican Church are saying these things too, notably the Bishop of Birmingham. But our national need for a universal knowledge of contraception is so great that those who accept it in principle ought to consider the possibility of engaging in definite propaganda for it. The kind of toleration that was shown, for instance, by the Bishops collectively at the last Lambeth Conference, like the step taken by the last Labour Government to make the giving of knowledge of contraception legal under certain very restricted circumstances, cannot be regarded as more than a beginning. Even Modernists should go far further than they have yet done.

Not only is no encouragement being given by the Churches as a whole to the learning of the facts about Birth Control, but the majority of Christian workers are definitely obstructing such teaching—and thus ensuring a constant repetition of the conditions they are fighting. A notable Churchman recently wrote to the press to deplore Mr. Justice McCardie's utterances. I wrote to him to tell him of some of the innumerable cases that come before me as a magistrate, of couples whose homes, health and happiness have been ruined by huge families, of the heavily-lined faces of mothers, worn out by a constant succession of ill-spaced births, and so on. He replied that if information about

contraception is put before young people, 'I dread to think of the result.' Is not this pure cowardice? Can sin ever be prevented by the withholding of knowledge? Only the other day I was approached by a social worker, a keen Christian woman, who asked help for an unemployed man with an enormous family. As we were speaking in private I mentioned Birth Control to her, and asked her if she believed in it. Her reply was significant. 'I do,' she said, 'but I mustn't. You see I'm High Church.' If a far bolder lead could be given from within the Church than anything that has yet come, I believe that a big response would be the result, even from within the Anglo-Catholic ranks.

This fear of the abuse of contraceptive knowledge by the unmarried is intelligible, but it ignores the undoubted fact that information about Birth Control is already available for those who are unlikely to be sufficiently self-disciplined to use it properly. Not only that, but even those who need and deserve Birth Control knowledge are acquiring false ideas about it. Just because the Churches will not accept Birth Control and teach the self-discipline and need for mutual consideration between husband and wife with which alone it can be a blessing, to-day the idea is spreading that Birth Control avoids all need for these virtues. By its silence and opposition the Church is on the one hand driving people to the horrible rubber-shops, where unsound goods are sold at exorbitant prices, and on the other preventing people from learning that, as with all God's gifts of knowledge, knowledge of contraception brings with it a great need for restraint and circumspection. It is the old story of the Prohibitionist over again. Public houses must not be re-modelled and reformed into healthy and cheerful places of entertainment, because this might encourage drinking, so they must continue to be such that by law young children must not enter them, but be left in the cold and wet on the pavement outside.

Is there any fundamentally Christian reason why the Churches should not only tolerate contraception, but preach its necessity and accompany that preaching with wise counsel about self-discipline and mutual consideration, counsel which to-day is being given by nobody? Contraception can produce its own evils and will increasingly do so unless the Churches will accept it and teach the conditions under which alone it is good. The only

feature of the Bolshevik revolution that appeals to me is the deliberate and official spreading of the knowledge that all would-be parents should possess. I recently heard Maurice Hindus (author of *Humanity Uprooted*) describe a wedding ceremony in Moscow at which he was present. After the ceremony both bride and bridegroom were asked if they wished to have information about procreation. Consenting, each was instructed by a teacher of the same sex in the principles of contraception and the desirability of adequately spacing births. Communists would not appreciate the statement, but I am convinced that the giving of such information as part of the marriage-ritual is far more truly Christian than, for instance, the second reason for marriage as given in the marriage service of the old Prayer Book. Will not at least the Modernist clergy see to it that as far as possible every couple whom they marry is provided with information about the laws of procreation, including contraception? A pamphlet* such as Dr. Helena Wright's might well be given to every prospective bride and bridegroom when the banns are put up.

If we accept the teaching of Birth Control as a Christian duty, we must go further and revise our standards on other matters. If we believe that it is un-Christian to bring into the world unwanted or tainted children, then we must accept sterilization and also reconsider our attitude towards abortion.

The tendency of our social legislation for a generation has been to concentrate upon the interests of the children. The rights of parents and other factors have all been rightly subordinated to the interests of their children. But we have never had the courage to say, 'This man or this woman is so bad a citizen, either because of his conduct or of his condition, moral, mental or physical, that it would be unjust to a child to be born of him or her.' So with the tacit approval of organized Christianity we have our innumerable mentally and physically defective parents and our many thousands of invalid children and waifs and strays. To-day it is probable that even voluntary sterilization is technically illegal. It should be for the Christian Churches, not only to demand that voluntary sterilization be made definitely legal,

**Marriage*, by Helena Wright, M.B., B.S., published by the Modern Churchmen's Union and on sale at their office, Church House, Westminster, S.W.1. Price one penny, or 1/- a dozen post free.

but also that it be made compulsory in many kinds of cases. My conception of Christ's teaching makes me believe that it is better in proper cases to impose limits on the freedom of grown-up individuals than to risk the creation of lives that must assuredly be lived in an asylum, a hospital, a prison or even an orphanage.

Finally, we ought not to blind our eyes to the question of abortion. It seems elementary to ask the question: What right has any individual, any Church or any nation to condemn those who practice abortion, when all knowledge of Birth Control is denied them and all use of it is denounced as immoral? To-day abortions are wholesale, mostly amongst the married, though the number of prosecutions is small, and infanticide is considerably more prevalent than is generally realized. Very often the motive for both is not wholly ignoble, a desperate desire in the interests of existing children not to increase their number. Were knowledge of contraception widespread, abortions and cases of infanticide would be few, a fact which those who oppose Birth Control would do well to ponder. But even so we need to consider whether our present laws against abortion under any circumstances are wise. On this question I have for many years been troubled in my conscience as a Christian, and now that Mr. Justice McCardie —all honour to him—has spoken out fearlessly, it is permissible to direct attention to it.

There can be no doubt that many of the beliefs that society has inherited on the question are to-day unconvincing. The legal writers of bygone centuries in England justify laws against abortion by quoting *Exodus*. In Hale's *Pleas of the Crown* (1678) we read . . . 'it be a great crime and by the judicial laws of Moses was punishable with death.' William Hawkins (1673—1746) wrote: ' . . . and in this respect also the common Law seems to be agreeable to the Mosaical.' And so on. The authority is always *Exodus* xxi, verses 22 and 23. To this a complete answer for us of to-day is to read the whole of this chapter. No chapter in the whole Bible is more deserving of the immortal words, 'But I say unto you.'

But even more enlightened exponents of the Christian *tabu* against abortion are equally unconvincing. Lecky in the *History of European Morals* (Vol. II, p. 25) says:

> 'That which appealed so powerfully to the compassion of the early and mediaeval Christians in the fate of the murdered infants was not

> that they died, but that they commonly died unbaptized; and the criminability of abortion was immeasurably aggravated when it was believed to involve, not only the extinction of a transient life, but also the damnation of an immortal soul.'

I am not urging that all abortion should be made legitimate; I do not know enough about the subject. But I am not convinced that any Christian authority can justify the illegality on grounds that are acceptable to-day to those who are consciously or unconsciously Modernists. It is significant that under the old ecclesiastical law abortion was only a crime if the embryo child had begun to live in the womb; apparently abortion in the early stages was not within the *tabu* of the Church. This criterion was only abandoned when medical science showed the impossibility of establishing the time at which life could be said to begin.

The idea that a child, conceived but not born, has a soul which is damned because unbaptized is surely intolerable. What of the child that is still-born without the act of anyone? This idea is at the root of the Roman Catholic belief that the life of the unborn child must be preferred to that of the mother, if such a crisis occurs at the time of birth that only one of them can be saved.

All I would ask in relation to abortion is that enlightened Christians should think out afresh whether all abortion should be illegal. The law against it is disregarded wholesale in every country. There is an enormous trade in evil and harmful drugs and in 'illegal operations,' conducted mostly by unskilled men and women who do not even know the elements of aseptic surgery. There is no more danger in operations for abortion, if properly conducted and conducted in time, than in other operations. But what I am mainly concerned with here is the Christian attitude. I greatly hope that enlightened theologians will study the problem and tell us authoritatively whether Christian standards demand our present laws which penalize all abortion.

In all these problems we seem to be in danger of repeating the mistake made by the Jews at the time of Christ. The Divine revelation was believed to be complete and the then existing laws were held to be its final expression. Our Lord taught the folly of this attitude. Can we be quite sure that the laws which our ancestors believed to be Christian, are the last word of the Divine revelation? We would do well to remember Lecky's warning:

> 'While theology has undoubtedly introduced into the world certain elements and principles of good, scarcely if at all known to antiquity, while its value as a tincture or modifying influence in society can hardly be overrated, it is by no means to the advantage of mankind that, in the form which the Greek and Catholic Churches present, it should become a controlling arbiter of civilization . . . In medicine, physical science, commercial interests, politics and even ethics, the reformer has been confronted with theological affirmations which barred his way, which were all defended as of vital importance and were all in turn compelled to yield before the secularizing influence of civilization' (pp. 6 and 18).

There is no greater problem before Christian Modernists than the thinking out of these problems. Conclusions upon them are more urgent than those on disputed points of exegesis or the value of the Reformation. The Christian Churches would do well to remember, as Lecky and more recently Dean Inge have reminded us, that in matters of sex they have a bad record. In the same December number of the *Modern Churchman* a reviewer of a book wrote that 'since the Church has done so much in the past to encourage the attitude that regards sex and sin as synonymous, we have the more anxiously looked for the signs of her taking a leading part in the present reaction, and thus preaching a sane, spiritual view of sex relationship.' In this new sane and spiritual view we shall concentrate first upon the interests of the child as a whole, not only on its soul. We shall ask whether it is well that it should be conceived or even that it should be born. If the answer is that the child would not have a fair chance, ought we not to thank God that science is more and more teaching us how the normal life of the parents can continue without that child being conceived, and perhaps if conceived, how to prevent its birth? And is not our supreme need that the Christian Churches shall co-operate with science, so that the knowledge we acquire shall be wisely and rightly used? Knowledge about procreation and how to prevent births is a terrible responsibility for mankind. If Christian workers only clamour vainly for the suppression of that knowledge, how can mankind progress?

Surely our Christian activities should go further than attempts to patch up the wreckage of the day. Bearing in mind our Lord's devotion to children, is it not incumbent on the Christian Churches to teach the view that the most un-Christian act that anyone can commit is to propagate human life thoughtlessly or recklessly? If this is the true Christian view, many of our existing standards and *tabus* will need to be drastically overhauled.

THE EGO IN TRANSIT

By the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A., B.Sc.

SINCE there is said to be a strong reaction against it, it may be worth while to examine the value of individualism in religion with a view to discovering whether it is a dead-end or a means of further advance.

We have to recognize at the outset that individualism is certainly not primitive. Among primitive peoples individual consciousness, as distinct from group consciousness, seems hardly to have emerged. As Frazer has declared, the boundary between the lower and the higher strata of humanity coincides, broadly speaking, with a transition from the reckoning of kinship by groups, to a reckoning of it by individuals. At the earliest stages, it is the group or herd which exists, and not the individual. Hobbes, as we now see, was wrong. It is not the existence of the social group which calls for explanation; it is rather the emergence of the individual as a self-conscious unit that calls for inquiry. Hobbes, as was natural in a pre-psychological, pre-anthropological age, put the cart before the horse, regarding the individual as historically prior to the group because to him he seemed logically prior thereto. The truth is that the individual did not start as a self-conscious constituent of a group, he was precipitated by the group—formed by it as a crystal is formed by a chemical solution. W. H. R. Rivers in his study of Polynesians was led to postulate something of the nature of a group instinct among them; and the *taedium vitae* which has afflicted certain of these peoples since they have come into contact with civilization, may be due to the failure of imperfectly individualized beings to survive the disintegration of their group. They are like cells of an organism which has died. Their lack of individual consciousness may also account for the indifference displayed by primitive people to death. 'We should commit a grievous error were we to judge all men's love of life by our own,' says Sir J. G. Frazer, 'and to assume that others cannot hold cheap what we count so dear.' Frazer has attributed the increased fear of death amongst civilized peoples in large measure to 'the spread of luxury and the doctrines of a gloomy theology, which by proclaiming the eternal damnation and excruciating torments of the vast majority of mankind has added

incalculably to the dread and horror of death.' But probably the crimson paint of the theologians has had all too little influence. The true reason why civilized man dreads death is that as a self-conscious individual he dreads extinction, whereas the savage, whose consciousness is not yet individualized, does not think of his own extinction. So long as the group survives, he survives in its life.

The point is that in the view of the modern anthropologist, the self-conscious individual is a comparatively late product in the evolution of mankind. The consciousness of primitive man is largely a group consciousness. This is why the punishment of Achan, though it revolts the modern mind, seems entirely right and natural to the savage as it doubtless did to Achan himself. Such a thing as individual responsibility is an impossible conception until the self-conscious individual has emerged.

The religion of primitive man at the pre-individual stage would appear to have consisted of certain group rites originating in sympathetic mimicry, the object of which was the practical one of food-getting—at first through hunting, and later through agriculture. (Magdalenian wall-paintings were concerned with the former, and fertility cults—out of which came the sacramental religions—with the latter.) In religion, however, although the group acted as one whole, there emerged individuals who served as leaders—medicine men, magicians, priests, priest-kings, and so on. These may have been the first conscious individuals (proto-individuals, Gerald Heard calls them in his *Ascent of Humanity*); but they may have simply been channels through which the psychic force of the group (generated by group ritual exercises—dancing, and so on) flowed. Like popular speakers and preachers to-day they derived psychic force from their audiences and gave it back to them; electrifying them with a current which originated not in the speaker, but in the audience. The medicine man gets his powers from the crowd; but the crowd does not know this, and regards its leader as a reservoir of force or *mana*; but the real reservoir of *mana* is the group, the medicine man or priest being no more than the channel of its flow. *Mana* flowing through a single individual is spectacular and impressive for exactly the same reason as a head of water spurting through a narrow nozzle is impressive. A medicine man is in reality nothing but a fire-hose. From another point of view he

is like the channel into which a stream is run so that it may turn a wheel. The group *mana* becomes effective when manipulated by a medicine man, magician or priest.

But this sort of thing is not religious individualism, it is only group religion finding a means of expression through an individual. Religion is still a group affair even though a priest does the magic. The *true* individual is not a mouthpiece, but a pioneer; he is not a *vox et praeterea nihil*, he is a creative source of what is new. He is not the idol of the group, he is its enemy—or is thought to be so by the group itself. He is not honoured, but stoned or crucified. He is not a medicine-man, magician or priest, but a prophet—alien to the group and an outcast from it. Psychologically he is an Ishmaelite; he is not at home in the group beliefs, but an exile from them—a pioneer, like Abraham, into the desert of the unknown. He is self-tortured, self-centred, misanthropic, brooding. His is a new species of consciousness, and the penalty is that he is a stranger and an enigma to his kind. He cannot understand their tongue nor they his. They snarl at him in fear and hatred while he shrinks back in astonished disgust. The group, which to the pre-individual was as comfortable as the warm womb to an unborn child, to the newly-emerged, self-conscious individual is something alien and hostile. The emergent individual is indeed a stranger and a sojourner; without hearth or home, and, like Melchizedec, without father, mother, or child.

The Hebrew prophets of the eighth century B.C. are the characteristic type of the new individualism in religion. These men initiated a revolution against the group religion of their time, which was a fertility cult centreing in holy places with sacred pillars of phallic significance. Upon these immemorial and perhaps now senile rites of the group religion, the prophets launched a bitter attack. So effective was their propaganda that there resulted a religious reformation of the most drastic character, culminating in the destruction of the local shrines and the slaughter of the holy men and women who practised there the time-honoured fertility rites. Though from our *post eventum* standpoint this prophetic protest seems natural, it was in point of fact a highly original movement, and was in reality a symptom of the emergence of an entirely new quality of consciousness. This fresh mutation of the human psyche was by no means con-

fined to Palestine, but seems to have extended from India to Sicily. This psychological awakening involved profound changes in human consciousness. The new self-conscious individual was concerned to a degree in which his predecessors were not, in personal behaviour, *i.e.* in 'morality.' The group ritual now seemed meaningless and therefore blasphemous to him. His God required no sacrifice, but righteousness—the 'clean heart.' The sense of sin had now emerged.

As is usual with a new type, these self-conscious, self-tortured individuals were at first sufficiently rare; they were biological 'sports.' Yet their influence was great, they were able to break the aeonic crust of tradition. The crowd of unindividualized traditionalists, of course, still persisted, and eventually were able to bring things back to something like their former condition. The group rites are restored in a rationalized and modified form. Through the gap which is always left between the prophet and the group which he despises and denounces, steps in the priest who is a more up-to-date version of the old-time worker of the fertility magic. But the new priest is a practitioner and an opportunist, and in the decline of prophetism he may establish a *concordat* with his erstwhile enemy, and prophets will be found (like Malachi) urging the people to contribute generously to the sustenation funds of the Temple where the emasculated fertility rites were still carried on.

Thus in some cases the new individual may be re-absorbed; and to this extent he becomes innocuous to established usages. Unless the individual can be dealt with in some such way, he is a perpetual source of danger, as he is a disintegrating factor in any community. Unless his energies can be canalized and so utilized as a source of power, they tend to explode. The presence of individualism in a community makes it unstable; centrifugal forces may develop at any moment with disastrous results.

Fortunately for the stability of religious institutions, the energy of the self-conscious individual can be side-tracked and even utilized for institutional purposes. The individual with his sense of sin can easily be induced to concentrate all his energies upon the quest of personal salvation, and this involves the sapping of those energies by asceticism. Such was the wise policy of the mediaeval Church. Religious individualists, a fruitful source of danger to Church and State alike, were herded into the

seclusion of monasteries. Thus the poison was isolated and rendered innocuous. Immured in the sanctuary these eager souls exhausted their energies in ascetic spiritual exercises, while their dangerously creative powers atrophied. They turned the implacable prayer-wheel until they dropped exhausted. But their labours were not wasted. By toiling at the treadmill they transformed their own energies into useable form, and made them available for institutional ends. The monasteries were power houses and the saints were the fuel. The insatiable furnaces were stoked perpetually with precious human material which burned well; and the great dynamos hummed perpetually, generating current to run the ecclesiastical machine all over Europe. These emaciated fanatics did not die in vain.

But as the generations passed, the individual, once a rare 'sport,' became increasingly common. Soon the monasteries could not absorb all the perilous stuff, and in many cases the individual, instead of concentrating in introvert fashion upon his own personal salvation, became a wild extrovert, seeking a field for his energies in the outside world. Fortunately, the renaissance world was an expanding one, and offered full scope to these adventurous souls. For those who chose politics as their sphere Machiavelli provided a suitable *vade mecum*. There was also the exploration and exploitation of a new continent, besides another outlet provided by the new interest of Baconian scientific research.

Nevertheless the rising tide of individuals proved too strong, and the religious unity of Christendom was shattered. For some generations Europe was in eruption. The settlement embodied in the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation lasted for two centuries, and then, heralded by a new outburst of idealism and individualist free-thought, came the Revolution. This time the resultant disturbance was less prolonged, and the liberated energy was canalized to run imperialistic ventures, nationalistic exploits, and commercial enterprises. Religion meanwhile remained formal and dormant. Individualism at this period was almost entirely extrovert in tendency. No one worried about his soul, but only how to grow rich and great in the shortest possible time. But by the close of the nineteenth century the limits had pretty well been reached. The various avenues through which the swarm of individualized extroverts could expend their ener-

gies and so find relief, began to prove inadequate. Pent forces accumulated dangerously, and an explosion was inevitable. Those who dared to look at the pressure gauge, shuddered and shut their eyes. In 1914 the catastrophe happened; the boiler went off with a terrific detonation, scattering ruin broadcast.

The upheaval, while it lasted, by harnessing the extrovert individual to the war machine, checked for the time being the inevitable disintegration. But as soon as peace broke out again, the individualist took the bit between his teeth. And since the old outlets of the nineteenth century were no longer available or no longer satisfying, the post-war brand of individualist soon began to surpass all records. Individualism now constituted a disintegrative poison of the utmost virulence, threatening the very existence of society.

This state of affairs constitutes our present problem. How is this disintegrative force of individualism to be dealt with? Can it be once more canalized, or suppressed, or converted into something else—some new and more healthy form of energy?

Religion should be able to do something for us, but it must be admitted that not much help comes from that quarter at present. True, there is some attempt on the part of the religionists to change the extrovert individualist into an introvert, interested in his own personal salvation. If this end could be once more achieved, as it was by the mediaeval Church, our problem would be solved. We could rebuild the monastic power-stations and get the dynamos going again; and in any case an introvert can never do much harm to anyone except himself. If religion *could* turn modern individualism inwards, our troubles would be over. We could get this poison out of our system. But it must be confessed that this does not seem likely. The modern individualist is altogether too tough-minded, and too restlessly active, to be persuaded to seek peace in the cloister. He refuses to be immured. He will not spend his days in rapt contemplation.

Far more effective as a panacea at present than religion is sport. This all-important factor in modern life has a tendency to run not only culture, but even commercialism, out of the field. It provides the devotee with an end in life; it demands ascetic practices, and it elicits also a large measure of co-operation and solidarity. Now that the practice of sport has spread far beyond British limits, it has become a means, perhaps, of sublimating

national rivalries, and may even be a substitute for war — now become all too destructively dangerous to civilization.

But even sport as a means of short-circuiting the dangerous energies of the extrovert individualist cannot be completely successful. True, it deservedly runs pietistic religion out of the field; but it has its weak point, its Achilles' heel. The time comes when even the most demented sportsman has his doubts. The dreadful question occurs to him, whether after all the whole business is not a pretence, whether it is not a substitute for life, and whether it does not stand at one remove, or even at more than one remove, from reality. When once this doubt has insinuated itself into the mind of our sportsman, his simple faith can never be the same. The serpent has crept into his paradise, and he must go forth into the hard, cruel world of reality, and say goodbye to his dreams. He becomes as helpless and as homeless as a saint who has lost his faith.

Sport cannot save us. We are driven back upon religion or upon ruin. And yet pietistic, soul-saving, world-escaping religion cannot avail. Is there, then, any alternative to despair, delirium, and suicide? Where can the distracted, auto-intoxicated modern find a refuge?

If it is hopeless for religion to try to turn the extrovert into an introvert (that is only, at best, an opportunist device), cannot it somehow *reabsorb* him? Cannot religion somehow revive in us the still dormant and not yet extinct group-consciousness which we inherit from our remoter ancestors? This reabsorbtion of the apparently insoluble individual need not be equivalent to a relapse into the herd instinct of the half-men whom as self-conscious, rational beings we have displaced. The evolutionary clock cannot so be put back. But is the self-conscious, rational, self-regarding individual (whether introvert or extrovert) an evolutionary terminus—a dead-end? True, hitherto he has seemed to be so, but the future of a species cannot be foretold from its past. Before the eighth century B.C., who could have foretold the emergence of a new type of humanity? And who can tell at the present time whether we do not stand at a new beginning? In any case the alternative seems to be either some further evolution in the human psyche, or collapse and degeneration—a slipping back into dim atavisms. Can we take the step forward? And, what is more, can religion help us to take that step?

Who knows?

PROBLEMS OF DIVINE WORSHIP

By the Editor.

AS man is a rational, and moral, and aesthetic, being, so is he also a religious being. Since man became man he has had a religion. Perhaps the most important criterion of a religion is its *cultus*—the object of its worship and the way in which it worships. In the long history of religious evolution there is hardly anything in the Universe which has not been the object of religious worship. Man has worshipped springs and rivers, rocks and mountains, animals of every kind, the heavenly bodies, his fellow-men and women. Besides these natural objects he has worshipped a number of artificial objects generally known as idols and fetishes. In addition to these visible objects he has worshipped a vast number of invisible existencies—the souls of all visible things, the spirits of the dead, demons and fiends, angels and guardian deities, tribal and national gods.

The methods of man's worship have been almost as diverse as its objects. They have included acts of reverence and supplicatory gestures; bowing, kneeling, uncovering the feet or head, salutations and prostrations, sprinklings, ablutions, mutilations, tatooings, kissing and licking. They have made use of incantations, spells, prayers, hymns, dances, instrumental music, processions and illuminations, the making of gifts, the pouring out of libations, the burning of incense, sacrificial meals, and the offering of animal and even human holocausts.

The emotions which prompted the worship were various. It was Epicurus who declared that fear created the gods, and there is no doubt that terror mainly inspired primitive worship. Man felt himself in the presence and grip of powerful and often unfriendly forces, which he desired to disarm and placate, and much of his worship had that purpose. It was, to use a Semitic phrase, 'a stroking of the face' of his deity.

But besides terror, which prompted men to seek protection, there were other motives for religious worship. There was a desire for intercourse or communion with higher beings. Odysseus pledged Pallas Athene in the toast, 'All men stand in need of the gods.' In intercourse with the gods there was great gain for mortals, not simply protection, but prosperity, happiness and wisdom.

A great step forward in worship was taken when certain notable religious leaders became convinced that what the Divine object of worship desired from his human worshippers was not material gifts or ritual acts, but the possession by them of certain moral and spiritual qualities—in short, character and conduct.

And a still further advance was made when it was recognized that the highest gifts which Deity could bestow were not success, long life, wealth and so on, but moral and spiritual blessings—righteousness, peace, holiness, fortitude, eternal life.

Religious *cultus* has been determined by the human conception of the Divine and of the human relation to it. In the history of Israel we have a vivid picture of certain stages in this evolution. The great eighth century prophets, Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah, were ardent ethical monotheists. For them there was but one God, the God of the Universe, its Creator and sustainer, and for Him there was but one kind of acceptable worship, which consisted of intense loyalty to Him combined with the practice of social righteousness.

In unswerving faith in the One God, in unflinching obedience to His will, Man's supreme good was found. God demanded from his worshippers not animal or human sacrifices, but righteousness and loving kindness. 'What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' The struggle between the prophets of ethical monotheism and the priests and people who clung to the older materialistic sacrificial worship was tremendous, but it ended in a compromise. The prophets failed to abolish the sacrificial worship. It was retained, but in subordination to the prophetic teaching that God's supreme demand is righteousness—obedience to His will is the sacrifice which pleases Him best. If that were given, then the priests added, God was pleased also to accept the sacrificial worship of the Jewish system. That compromise is enshrined in the curious contrast created by the priestly addition of the last two verses to the prophetic Psalm li :

The prophet speaks:

'Thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it Thee; but Thou delightest not in burnt offerings.'

The priest adds:

'O be favourable and gracious unto Sion. Build Thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, with the burnt offerings and oblations; then shall they offer young bullocks upon Thy altar.'

In the post-exilic period the ethical monotheism of the great prophets becomes the legalist monotheism of the Scribes and Pharisees. Then Jesus comes; once again the great notes of the ethical monotheism of Hosea and Jeremiah, of Amos and Isaiah are heard in Israel, but they had no welcome sound. Jesus Himself offers the supreme sacrifice of ethical monotheism — absolute obedience to the Father's Will, and the Christian Church arises separated from Judaism by the thin red line of the Messiah's blood. At first its worship is a simple ethical monotheism in accordance with the great prophetic ideal. We have it set forth in the Epistle of James, the brother of Jesus. He writes, 'Pure worship (*θρησκεία*) before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world.'

Quickly that ideal of Divine worship experienced change and corruption. Christian worship was influenced by Jewish models, Pagan environment, and Jewish-Christian apocalyptic visions literally interpreted. It is a long, intricate, and painful story.

The ethical monotheistic conception of worship grew dim, and although the Reformation came, yet the primitive purity of Christian worship was not completely recovered. Sacerdotalism and sacramentalism, some would even say magic and idolatry, still corrupted large spheres of Christian worship.

To many to-day the worship of the Christian Religion presents itself as polytheistic and idolatrous. So it seems, and not without justification, to the Muslims. In contemporary Roman Catholicism the three objects of Divine worship seem to be (1) the Host, the consecrated wafer, the *Sanctissimum* of the Mass, (2) the Virgin Mary, (3) the Saints.

The first receives the highest form of adoration; the second receives it in a less degree; the third in a less degree still. It was this which led Archbishop Benson, no perfervid Protestant, to say when in Algiers that the worship in the Mohammedan mosques seemed to him to be more in harmony with what Divine worship should be, than the worship in the Roman Catholic churches.

But if Romanist worship needs purgation, as it does, Protestant worship also needs revision and revaluation. The silence of the Quaker meeting, the joyful noise of the Salvation Army, the formal combination of prayer and praise, instruction and exhor-

tation, alms-giving and sacramental worship of the English Church, the simpler services of Protestant dissent, do not fulfil the prophetic ideal of worship. For that ideal makes the whole life of the worshipper, and not certain liturgical acts, the *cultus* of the Deity. It is only the constant recollection of this fact which keeps liturgical worship in its proper place and leads to its constant adjustment to the purpose for which it exists. And what is that purpose?

The purpose of liturgical worship is to assist those who take part in it to offer in their daily lives 'the *real* (ἀληθινός) worship' (to quote the phrase of St. John iv, 28) of a life spent in the service of God and man.

And so these liturgical services exist to be a constant reminder of the Divine Being and the Divine Will and our human relations and consequent duties. Each liturgical service should inspire the practical resolution expressed in the first of our post-communion collects, 'Here we offer and present unto Thee ourselves, our souls and bodies to be a reasonable, holy, and lively, sacrifice unto Thee.'

In accordance with different temperaments, different degrees of education, rational, moral, and aesthetic, this worship will be offered in different ways. Professor Santayana thus defines, as he sees them, the three benefits of prayer as he understands it. (1) The soul withdraws within itself and defines its real good. (2) It accommodates itself to its destiny. (3) It grows like the ideal it conceives.

This sounds very abstract, but it can be translated into concrete Christian experience by each, and so liturgical worship becomes what may be called creative worship.

Hence the test of liturgical worship is its creative efficiency. First and foremost it must secure the experience of communion with God. How this experience is to be explained is quite subordinate to the realization of this experience. The mystical element in liturgical worship is its most important constituent. When it has once been experienced—it is like the experience of love—it is futile to argue against its reality and value. Religious literature, like the Psalms, is full of this experience. It may be an opiate in the eyes of the secularist and a deception when analysed by the sceptic, but the worshipper who knows something of the deep satisfaction, the peace, trust, strength, joy, spiritual insight,

it provides, is only impressed by the superficiality and futility which characterize the arguments which scout it. This mystical experience vouchsafed in the shrine is carried by the worshipper into the dusty paths of daily duty.

'There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of an everlasting chime,
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusty lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet
Because their souls a secret strain repeat.'

The other great contribution of adequate liturgical worship is moral stimulus and enlightenment. Duties not hitherto realized stand out clearly. Near horizons become clear-cut, far horizons come into sight. 'The Stern Daughter of the Voice of God,' of Wordsworth's magnificent ode, becomes as the worshipper listens to the sacred eloquence of scripture and pulpit, the noble music of chant and hymn, the bride of his soul.

In the light of these ideals of worship, do not the liturgical controversial differences between Romanist and Protestant sink into such utter insignificance, as Lowell, who had passed far beyond all sectarian limitations, visualizes in his *Godminster Chimes*?

Moravian hymn and Roman chant
In one devotion blend
To speak the soul's eternal want
Of Him the inmost friend
One prayer soars cleansed with martyr fire,
One choked with sinner's tears,
In heaven both meet in one desire,
And God one music hears.

May not the *cultus* of the Host, the Virgin, and the Saints, be as effective as the sole worship of the Divine Father in Spirit and in Truth?

We recall the saints which Romanism has produced as different as S. François Xavier and Friedrich von Hügel. We recall the selfless hymn of devotion of the former, 'My God, I love Thee not because I hope for heaven thereby,' and the 'little visits to the Blessed Sacrament' of the latter. We recall too those tremendous words of Christ, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' They did undoubtedly offer the *real* worship of their lives, and a liturgical worship, which seems to be unjustified in

the light of religious evolution, did, so they believed, assist them to offer that real worship. Can we in the light of such examples and such testimony forbid this kind of liturgical worship? After all is not all liturgical worship symbolical?

What seem to the superficial observer to be actual objects of worship are merely the apparatus of the *cultus*. It is not these which are actually worshipped, but the Divine Nature which they symbolize. God is invisible. We see Him unveiled in various ways in His Universe. It is not the things or persons in which He is unveiled that we worship. It is Him unveiled in them. Where He is most unveiled, as, for instance, in Jesus Christ, there we give the highest, profoundest adoration; and where He is not so fully unveiled we offer a less profound adoration, as in the case of the Divine Unveiling in the Virgin and the Saints. It is not them we adore, but the Deity manifest in them.[1]

This is the line of defence taken by Roman Catholic apologists for those features of their liturgical *cultus* which are condemned by Protestants. We are bound to admit the strength of their defence. Such a way of viewing the matter seems to bring the Divine more intimately into human life and to make God more accessible for purposes of human devotion, and yet it must be confessed on the other hand that it does not bring Him nearer than does a pure spiritual mysticism such as is expressed in Tennyson's well-known lines:

> 'Speak to Him, thou, for He heareth,
> And spirit with spirit can meet.
> Closer is He than breathing,
> Nearer than hands and feet.'

Nor when we contemplate God in relation to the Universe does this Roman symbolical *cultus* secure, at least for educated people, that sense of the ever-present Deity which we have in Wordsworth's Nature-Mysticism:

> 'And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things.'

[1] (1) *latria*, (2) *hyperdulia*, (3) *dulia* are the Romanist technical terms for these degrees of worship.

In the Roman *cultus* God is localized, and this has the effect in the case of simple people of limiting His terrestrial presence to certain sacred places, objects, and times. This is distinctly retrogressive, and in tendency materialistic. The longest of the Homilies of the Reformed Church treats of the peril of idolatry, and the modern student of Divine worship cannot, although no fierce iconoclast, shut his eyes to the fact that there is in religious *cultus* such a thing as idolatry—that when it appears in the *cultus* of the Christian Religion it is a corruption of that religion—a *superstition*—that is a survival from a lower into a higher stage of religious evolution. It served a useful purpose in the lower stage, but is an anomaly in the higher. When it is asserted that Catholicism is as old as the Christian Religion, the scholar's retort, 'Yes, and a great deal older,' is only too true of these superstitious elements in its *cultus*.

To-day we should not condemn it on the ground that the Second Commandment of the Decalogue forbids idolatry, or that God is a jealous God and will not behold without indignation the worship which is due to Himself given by His creatures to objects which are lower than the Highest. God can know no jealousy into which the motive of personal umbrage enters, but at least it is reasonable to believe that a God of love Who created man in His own image must will to be worshipped in such a manner as to create in His worshipper a growing likeness to Himself.

We are only too well aware when we recall the 'idols' of Bacon's *Novum Organum* that the modern man who condemns in a superior way the use of images and material objects in divine worship may be guilty of a more deleterious form of idolatry than the simple charcoal burner kneeling before the Reserved Sacrament or the image of his patron saint. But two wrongs do not make one right. The true order of Divine *cultus* has undoubtedly been *ex umbris et imaginibus in lucem*, and it is the duty of all who desire the evolution of spiritual religion to strive against the forces of superstition whether in faith or worship.

The scientific student of religion observes that the course of its evolution has been marked by the discarding of lower objects of worship in favour of the higher; at last the many have given place to the One, by Whom, and in Whom, and through Whom are all things. These advances have not been made without in-

tense suffering to the protagonists of the higher *cultus*, and to the adherents of the lower *cultus*. 'If Jehovah be God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him,' cried Elijah, and he added when the victory was won, 'Take the prophets of Baal, let not one of them escape . . . and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slew them there' (I *Kings* xviii).

The Christian Religion demands the same warfare, but it prescribes other methods. Not the sword of Elijah, but the sword of the Spirit; not the torture of the Inquisition but rational, moral, and spiritual education.

The Christian Church in the Spirit of the Maccabaean martyrs conquered the Paganism of the Roman Empire because it refused with magnificent, some will even think with meticulous, heroism to perform the very slightest acts of worship to its deities —most of all to the genius of the Roman Emperor—the symbol of the Roman power, justice, and order, which St. Paul had declared to be 'of God,' the source of the *Pax Romana*, an important factor in the *Praeparatio Evangelica*. They called it uncompromisingly 'the worship of the Beast,' and died in excruciating tortures rather than give it any observance. Their spirit is seen in Tertullian's *De Corona militis*, the story of a Christian soldier who on account of these principles refused to wear a garland on the Emperor's birthday. We see it exemplified in a scene at the close of the *Revelation* of St. John, the Divine. The apocalyptic seer, in gratitude to the angel who had shown him the secrets of eternity, falls down at the angel's feet to worship him. The angel forbids him. 'See thou do it not, worship God.'

The problem of purity of *cultus* is very much with us to-day in the Church of England. A pre-Christian type of *cultus* is striving for supremacy within it. Ought or ought not the Consecrated Wafer in the Mass to be worshipped?

The Bishop of Birmingham in his strenuous and courageous efforts to check the superstitious *cultus* of the Reserved Sacrament in the Church of England has not only on his side the support of the liturgical law of the Church of England, but also the support of the principles of the New Testament, and the scientific testimony of the evolution of religion.

THE IMPACT OF HOLY SCRIPTURE ON THE MINDS OF MODERN MEN

IT is the purpose of this paper to draw attention to the harm, the active, positive harm, that is accruing from the reading aloud of the Bible as it is done at present in our churches, and this in spite of the fact that our Holy Scriptures are incomparable in their beauty and in their spiritual significance.

Some may say of the paper's title, 'there is no impact,' or an impact so slight as to be negligible; but that is not altogether true, or rather it is not true of all our people. There are still many thousands of men and women and children in our country who go to church more or less regularly, and who therefore hear our Scriptures read aloud.

To private Bible reading the following arguments cannot all be applied, but in many cases they will be found to hold good, because the harmful customs extant in our churches have been copied, in many instances, by devout people in their private reading of Scripture.

Before we consider what is the effect of this impact of Scriptural ideas upon the minds of men to-day, it will be well to gain a clear idea of the end that Christians hope to attain by this age-long custom of reading aloud their Holy Writings week by week or day by day. We can then compare that end with what is happening in our midst.

In order to be sure of my ground in writing this paper, I sent a question to a number of clergymen to this effect:

> What is the end to which the reading aloud of Holy Scripture in church is the means?

Grouping similar answers, and summarizing all in order to save space, we have what may be considered a fairly accurate estimate of the 'end' desired, an estimate to the terms of which most thoughtful men would, I think, subscribe.

Speaking generally, the 'edification' of those who read and of those who hear is the end desired. More particular definitions I have summarized thus: The Bible is read aloud in church that we may learn

(*a*) Jewish History;

(*b*) Jewish religious history, culminating in Christianity;

(*c*) A personal knowledge of God and of His ways with men. All the answers received, some very beautiful, can be classed under one or other of these heads, and, thus arranged, are easier to handle.

It is by means of the Old Testament that most of the positive harm is done; the nature of the misuse of the New is different. Let us think first of the reading of the Old Testament.

Whether we consider one or all of the sections, (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) of the desired end, it will soon, I think, be apparent that we fail, in a great many cases, to attain that end.

Our people do not, and cannot, learn Jewish, or any other history, by having odd anecdotes, stories, folk tales, and accounts of battles read to them from time to time, *no connecting link being given or suggested.*

Still less chance have they under the above régime of tracing the history of religion among the Jews. Passages of wonderful power and insight they hear read from various prophets; sentences, on the other hand, which are almost grotesque when applied to the Almighty; but no indication is given of the position in religious history which is occupied by any one idea or group of ideas. No suggestion is made that this or that passage illustrates a very primitive idea of God, or a marvellous development in religious thought. They are, to the average hearer, chapters out of the Bible, and, as such, all of equal value.

It is very difficult indeed for clergymen to listen to Holy Scripture, especially the Old Testament, with the ears of the average attender at church. Directly the Lesson begins, it falls into place, as it were, in the minds of the clergy; they know what has come before in the history of the Jews, what is coming after, where such a thing happened, what its effect was. They know the characters of the people mentioned, and so forth, and they rarely seem to realize the abysmal ignorance which exists in the minds of most of those to whom they are reading. A very large maojrity of those who attend our churches nowadays are incapable of supplying any context or background whatsoever to the portions of Scripture read on any given occasion.

These considerations regarding sections (*a*) and (*b*) are saddening, Bible reading such as this is useless, but the case

becomes worse as we go on to section (*c*). By the present method of reading in church our people certainly gain some knowledge of God and of His ways with men, but true and false, worthy and unworthy ideas all find a place in this knowledge.

A picture they gain of the loving Father-Saviour revealed by our Lord in His life and teaching, infinite and unchangeable in His truth and beauty and majesty, but this is mixed through and through with visions of a God Who acts savagely and capriciously—in a way that fine men would scorn to do—and then '*repents Him of the evil which He thought to do unto His people*.'

The ideas of God suggested by many of the Old Testament Lessons—by some, even, of the Psalms—are not the ideas of Him taught by our Lord; worse than that, they are often diametrically opposed to those He taught.

The Bishops at Lambeth, in their report on 'The Christian Doctrine of God' (page 76, *Report of Lambeth Conference*, 1930), begin one section by a consideration of 'some of the inadequate or unworthy conceptions of God current in the Church itself.'

> 'Many of these imperfect conceptions,' they say, 'may be traced to the belief, still prevalent, in the equal authority of all parts of the Bible. In spite of the light long since thrown upon the conditions under which its several books were written and upon the progressive revelation of sacred knowledge they record, the Bible is even now too often treated as if every statement about God, contained in every part of it, must find a place in our present apprehension of Him. The result is a confused vision in which early and preparatory thoughts of Him are allowed to intrude upon the revelation of the Divine Being in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. . . . Thus it is that side by side with a true apprehension of the beauty of Christ's character and a real sense of His abiding presence there co-exists in many minds a thought of God far short of the perfection so revealed.'

So long as the Old Testament is read aloud Sunday by Sunday without note or comment, so long will these inadequate and unworthy ideas of God continue to be held by a large majority of our people. Wise and true teaching on the subject in Sunday Schools, Bible Classes, occasional sermons, or series of addresses may help slightly—the quotation from the Bishops' Report shows *how* slightly—but they will never make headway against the steady pressure of unadulterated Bible reading in our churches.

There is a psychological as well as a merely intellectual reason for this, a reason that makes our action in allowing such reading to go on seem terribly significant and tragic. We have in our hands a powerful instrument for good, and we are using it so that it produces evil.

All students of psychology know the tremendous power of written or spoken words repeated over and over again — else would there be no advertisements! We are using that knowledge in an utterly wrong way when we allow inadequate or false statements about Almighty God to be dinned into the ears of our younger brothers and sisters, not once, or occasionally, but over and over again from childhood onwards. In so doing are we not causing little ones to stumble?

Again, even elementary psychology shows us that environment and circumstances have much to do with the impression made by words upon our deeper selves. A quiet hushed atmosphere, fine music, beautiful surroundings, all help to render us more susceptible. In many of our churches we have all these. In addition, the great mass of our people are hearing words more finely spoken, passages more beautifully read, than they do at any other times in their lives. For all these reasons the messages of Holy Scripture find a ready entrance to their souls. I say souls rather than minds, for the mischief goes deeper than the mind; it is impressed upon the very depths of being—it must, in truth, become part of those who listen.

Such being the case, should not the words used in our churches convey the very finest ideas of our God that the mind of man can conceive? Should not the impress Sunday by Sunday, or day by day, be the impress of ideas really God-like, really worthy, as far as human words can be worthy, of the God and Father and Saviour of us all?

If unworthy ideas of God must be produced for historical reasons, should it not be made very clear that they are ideas of the past — exploded entirely since religion developed and our Lord taught us better?

A sentence or two of explanation read before any Old Testament Lesson containing inadequate conceptions of God, would lessen the evil, but it would not do away with the psychological effect of the iteration of sentences such as 'O Lord God

to Whom vengeance belongeth; Thou God to Whom vengeance belongeth, show Thyself.'

May I point out, too, with regard to sections (*a*) and (*b*) that the effort to teach the history of our religion to each and all, young and old, gentle and simple, in a continuous movement all through their lives, does not accord with modern methods of education. The history of any branch of knowledge is usually studied by advanced pupils only, and, once grasped, is in most cases set aside. Medical students at the end of their course study the history of medicine in the past, but they do not keep before their minds while learning their profession the medical maxims of a by-gone day; neither do they, as a rule, continue to study them during the whole course of their own career. Such a treatment, however, as regards religious history we are applying to our Church people when we read aloud to them out-of-date learning on things religious, week in, week out, from year's end to year's end.

The idea of the usefulness of reading through the greater part of the Bible once or twice every year was conceived at a time when our thoughts about the Holy Scriptures and about the use of them were very different from the thought of to-day. The suitability of such a system for those in religious orders need not be examined here; what we are considering is the true use of Holy Scripture for the men, women, and children who listen to it in our churches to-day.

So far this paper has dealt with the impact of the Scriptures on the minds of men as it now is; to deal wisely with it as it might become if we altered for the better our immemorial customs as regards Bible-reading in church, is a very different matter; it needs the skill and time and patience of experts.

A few suggestions, however, may not be out of place here, suggestions made full in the face of the fact that so tiny a percentage of our people hear Old or New Testament Lessons read in church on week-days that we must confine ourselves entirely to those read on Sundays.

If Jewish history must form part of the Lessons, could not two very short summaries be compiled, one an account of the outward facts only, and these summaries be divided into portions suitable for single Lessons, each one after the first, prefaced by a few sentences of revision—something after the way

serial stories are treated in newspapers—so that any hearer could listen intelligently, and hear, not with the ear only, but 'with the understanding also'? The other short summary—of the development of ideas of God among the Jews, and of His dealings with men—might be illustrated in each Lesson by quotations from appropriate psalms or prophetic writings, or other parts of the Old Testament.

These abridged histories might be read once or twice a year as was found best, and they might also be published in pamphlet form, or on cards for distribution in church; and in the reading of all other Old Testament Lessons reference, consisting of a few sentences, could be made to one or other of these little histories as occasion offered. Especially when the Lesson contained an inadequate or unworthy idea of God should it be pointed out that this was the Jewish conception of God *at that stage* of their history.

By a scheme such as the above we should cease to din into the ears of ignorant people ideas of God of which many non-Christians would be ashamed, our worshippers would hear all truth and beauty about our God as far as we have received it, and the false and inadequate ideas held at one time by the Jews would fall into their proper place, and be seen only in true proportion.

The reading aloud of the New Testament belongs, of course, to quite a different category. There is no question there of false ideas of God, but even the New Testament, read as we read it in church, is not nearly so useful—so 'edifying'—as it might be. From it, too, two histories might be compiled, and used as references—one a bird's-eye view of the Life of our Lord, and the other a *short* account of the *Acts of the Apostles*, both to be read once or twice a year, both to be had by worshippers in church either *gratis* or for a few pence.

A very slight reference to one or other of these summaries would, I am quite sure, make for a much more intelligent hearing of Scripture.

Again, when the Epistles are read, their usefulness would be vastly increased if they were prefaced by a few sentences describing the people to whom they were written, the main idea in the writer's mind, or any special circumstances connected with them.

Surely the reading in church of every single Lesson from Old Testament or New is a *means to an end*—otherwise it is breath wasted; time, and a very valuable opportunity, thrown away. If we, who for a great many years have listened to these Lessons, are seeing now that very often no worthy end is attained —is there not need for a drastic change in our customs?

In writing as I have done above I am not leaving out of account the hundreds of fine and beautiful passages that our people hear read from the Old and New Testaments in the course of each year; what I am regretting is that the strength and power and beauty of such is so injured and enfeebled by our method of presentation. We are making a very poor use of the riches entrusted to us by Almight God.

I. Somers Neill.

BOOK REVIEWS

HUMOUR AMONG THE CLERGY.*

Probably the wittiest of English clergymen was Sydney Smith; the wittiest of English Bishops, Stubbs of Oxford; the wittiest of Archbishops, Magee. Who was the most humorous of English clergy? We are inclined to think that Dean Swift exceeded all others in his power of sardonic humour; Lawrence Sterne in benign humour; and Charles Dodgson in pure humour. Father O'Flynn may have outstript them all, but in addition to being an Irish priest he is also a mythical personage, and so for our purpose does not count. The author of *Humour among the Clergy* undertakes no such investigations, and so avoids making invidious distinctions. He does not attempt to discover whether clerical humour can be distinguished from lay humour. We doubt if it can be. Could anything be more laic than the humour of Rabelais, the ex-monk, or more clerical than the humour of Joseph Addison, civil servant and diplomatist? Our author is satisfied with collecting a number of humorous stories connected with clergymen who, like Falstaff, are not only witty in themselves but are also a cause of wit in other men. These incidents are classified under such headings as 'When the Plate goes round,' 'Wilt thou have this woman?' 'When the Parson scores,' etc. The stories are united by a running comment which not only provides the proper background, but elucidates and illustrates the finer points in the narratives.

Dean Inge contributes the Introduction, in which he says: 'There is a good laugh in the book, and no irreverence.' The Dean also contributes four stories, of which one is as follows:—

> An old clergyman wished to send off an appropriate telegram to a girl who was being married. He gave in a telegram a reference to I John iv, 18, and signed it. The words are, 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear.'' Nothing could be nicer. But the telegraph clerk left out the figure I, turning it into a reference to

* *Humour among the Clergy*. By John Aye. (Pub. University Press, Chancery Lane, W.C.2: 1931. Price 5/-.)

the Gospel of St. John. The bride received the telegram after the ceremony, and borrowed a Bible. She promptly went into hysterics, as she read John iv, 18, 'He whom thou now hast is not thy husband.'

Ian Hay writes the Preface, which opens with the aphorism: 'Anecdotes are the small change of history.' Under the heading 'Gems from the Sunday School,' the author relates the following story:—

'A penny,' said the Irish Sunday School teacher, 'to the boy who can tell me the greatest man in history.' 'Christopher Columbus,' said one boy. 'George Washington,' said a second. 'St. Patrick,' shouted a sharp little Jewish boy. 'Right,' said the teacher. 'Here's the penny. What made you say St. Patrick?' 'I knew all the time it was Moses,' answered the little Jew, 'but business is business.'

H.D.A.M.

PROTESTANT *VERSUS* ROMANIST.*

Mr. Poynter has written a very interesting book. It is a book of facts; there is no elucidation of principles or deliverance of verdicts. The facts with which Mr. Poynter is concerned are the facts of religious conflict and persecution in Great Britain and Ireland from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth. His descriptive statements are characterized by remarkable fairness and tolerance. There seems to us to be one serious exception, quite unconscious, we are sure, on Mr. Poynter's part. He describes with poignant detail the Cromwellian campaign against the rebel Irish, but only gives a very brief and colourless account of the horrors of the Irish Rebellion and the terrible massacres which provoked Cromwell's reprisals. For every one Papist rebel whom Cromwell slew, there had been ten Protestants slain by the Papists. Mr. Poynter refuses, as we have noted, to assess the rights and wrongs. Each side was fighting, often fighting desperately for existence, in an age in which tolerance was regarded as a vice rather than a virtue, and judicial cruelty was deliberately exercised in order to terrorize the opponents of the Government. It may surprise some to learn that the learned Archbishop Usher in 1626 declared that 'to give the Irish Papists toleration, or to consent that they may freely exercise their religion and profess their faith and doctrine, is a grievous sin'; not less painful is the fact that Latimer preached the sermon at the horrible and agonizing execution of the Franciscan Friar, John Forest, at Smithfield in 1538.

This book has a Preface by Bishop Headlam. In it he discusses judicially the Penal Acts against Roman Catholics. They were not, he rightly remarks, 'a pleasing episode in our history.' In seeking to determine whether they were justified, he says:—

'There are two fundamental facts that have to be remembered. The first is that they only inflicted on Roman Catholics what they had inflicted on others. The Reformation was prepared for by the persecution of the Lollards. Queen Mary in four years burnt to death more than all the Roman Catholics who were put to death in the next hundred years, and however brutal the treatment of Ireland may have been, the rule of the Duke of Alva in the Low Countries was more terrible.

Then, secondly, this policy was inspired by a great fear—a fear which arose from the claim of the Church of Rome to exercise temporal power over the nations of the world. The Jesuit priest who paid the

* *The Reformation, Catholicism and Freedom.* By J. W. Poynter. (Pub. S.P.C.K., 1930. Price 6/-.)

death penalty in Queen Elizabeth's day was a political and national enemy, who was the agent and spy of external powers, who aimed at deposing the Queen, who would have rewarded her assassination, and desired to impose Roman Catholicism by force on the nation.'

We observe that Dr. Headlam commends the Roman Church for its attitude towards birth control. He writes :—

'A great strength to the Roman Church is the wholesome and determined attitude that the Church has always taken towards birth control.'

He then adds, as though this were not one of the main purposes of birth control,

'The future of the world lies with those nations and creeds which produce a healthy and vigorous population' (p. x).

A good idea of the lucidity of Mr. Poynter's descriptive writing may be obtained from the following passage :—

'The prisoners of the Inquisition were never allowed to see the witnesses against them. This rule seems detestable to us, and indeed it *was* detestable; but it has a significance of an important kind. Had trials been open, or even had witnesses been known, the object of the Inquisition would largely have been defeated: for that object was not the punishment of civil crime but the prevention of the spread of freedom of thought. In short, the 'hidden' character of Inquisitional methods was a characteristic arising from the exclusivist theory of the mediaeval system. Torture was employed to extort confessions; and, when a convicted person was condemned to the fire, the punishment was made an occasion for an imposing public religious display. A procession was formed of the accused, in order of their innocence or guilt; first, the ones found innocent, these wearing their ordinary dress, and separated from the others by a crucifix; then came the effigies of dead heretics, with inscriptions intimating their crimes; and finally, the condemned, each clad in a yellow garment (*san benito*), decorated with significant emblems. St. Andrew's crosses marked those who had escaped with their lives; red flames those who were threatened with burning if again convicted; and representations of devils surrounded with flames covered the robes of those who were to suffer death. Thus apparelled, the convicted prisoners were led before the Inquisitor, who, with a profession of reluctance, handed them over to the secular power, and they were burnt' (pp. 83-84).

X.Y.Z.

WEEDS IN THE GARDEN OF MARRIAGE.

Captain George Pitt-Rivers, B.Sc., a grandson of the famous anthropologist, has dealt clearly and forcibly with the need for eugenics in his book, *Weeds in the Garden of Marriage.** Sir Arthur Keith writes an appreciative preface to it, in which he says there are two points on which he and Captain Pitt-Rivers are in agreement.

'The first business of those who believe in Eugenics as a means to national health and happiness is to teach themselves the principles of right breeding and then to teach them to the people until conviction is brought home to every family. It has to be a national, not a legislative movement.

* *Weeds in the Garden of Marriage.* By G. Pitt-Rivers. (Pub. Noel Douglas, 38 Great Ormond Street, London: 1931. Price 3/6.)

> The second ground the author and I have in common is that both of us have that strange—but, thank goodness, common—failing of the nationally minded—a desire that England—the British Isles—shall be great and prosperous, not only while we live, but thousands of years after we are dead. . . . Some strange prejudice makes us think of our own country first and foremost.'

Captain Pitt-Rivers sees in the Roman Catholic Church the great enemy of Eugenics, and attacks it fiercely. His attack would be more effective if his own position were not secularist. To make the choice between eugenics and dysgenics a choice between secularism and religion is bad strategy. struction. We agree with him in this, but also realise that the raising of the standard of general education will prove at least as effective.

P.R.H.

CORRESPONDENCE

SIR OLIVER LODGE AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE MORTAL BODY.

To the Editor of the *Modern Churchman.*

SIR,

For some time past attempts have been made by writers and preachers in the Churches to support their usual teaching—that the mental or physical body of Christ rose after his death upon the Cross, and that the mortal or physical body of every man will rise 'at the Last Day'—by quoting Sir Oliver Lodge as not being adverse to the resurrection of the mental or physical body of the Christ.

As physical experiences and scientific investigation have long since shown that not mortal or physical human body, either of the Christ or of anyone else, can rise again and function after death, but that it is the spiritual body which rises and can materialize in manifestation; I recently wrote to Sir Oliver Lodge asking him to be so good as to inform me whether he did, or did not, believe in the resurrection of the mortal or physical body of The Christ or of any other person, in order that I might be in a position to confirm or deny these reports. In due course I received a letter from him, under date November 5th, 1931, in which he says 'If anyone thinks I have said anything to substantiate the idea of resurrection of our mortal bodies and the use of them hereafter, he is mistaken.' From this it is perfectly clear that Sir Oliver does not believe in the resurrection of the mortal or physical body, either of The Christ or of any other persons.

CHARLES L. TWEEDALE.

Weston Vicarage,
Nr. Otley, Yorks.

THE THIRD BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF JEWS AND CHRISTIANS.

SIR,

On Monday, the 30th November, the Society of Jews and Christians held its third Biennial Conference at the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Hinde Street, W.1.

The object of this Society is to give adequate opportunity to Jews and Christians to meet for the promotion of their common ideals, with mutual respect for differences of religious belief.

Many subjects of vital importance to the future of the religious world have been frankly discussed at its previous meetings, but never before have its speakers probed so deeply at the roots of all Religion and Theology, as when, under the chairmanship of Dr. C. G. Montefiore, 'The Reality of God' was discussed and debated by the Rev. O. C. Quick, D.D., Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral, and Rabbi Harold F. Reinhart, Senior Minister of the West London Synagogue of British Jews. A general discussion followed, led by Sir Philip Hartog, K.B.E.

The Evening Session, after the customary 'United Act of Worship,' was devoted to considering the problem, 'How to stimulate belief in God.' The speakers, representing the two faiths, were the Hon. Lily H. Montagu, J.P., Doctor of Hebrew Law, and Mr. J. W. Graham, of The Society of Friends. Amongst those who took part in the subsequent discussion were Rabbi Dr. Mattuck, Senior Minister of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, the Rev. Frank Lenwood, M.A., of Plaistow Congregational Church, the Rev. R. Scott Frayn, B.A., and the Rev. Canon Tissington Tatlow, M.A., D.D., the Rector of All Hallows, Lombard St., and Chairman of the Session.

The speakers, lay or clerical, Christian or Jew, were filled one and all with a burning desire consciously to direct their common religious motives towards righteousness, goodwill and peace. In the spirit and according to the letter of the late Dr. Abrahams 'they no longer sought to score points off each other, but rather to add to the common total of points scored by truth in its contest against falsehood, by humanism against obscurantism.'

GEORGE A. YATES.

THE MODERN CHURCHMEN'S UNION COUNCIL ELECTION, 1932.

SIR,

I shall be obliged if you will kindly give publicity to the following official notice to members of the Modern Churchmen's Union.

By the Constitution the following elected members of the Council retire on the day of the Annual General Meeting (May 25th, 1932) and are *not eligible for re-election, viz.,* The Rev. G. F. Allen, The Rev. F. G. Given-Wilson, The Rev. F. de W. Lushington, The Rev. Dr. H. D. A. Major, The Rev. E. St. G. Schomberg, The Rev. H. J. Trueman, The Rev. G. H. Webb.

The following co-opted members of the Council retire on May 25th, but *are eligible for re-election, viz.,* Miss E. M. Beaumont, The Rev. J. S. Boys-Smith, The Rev. R. G. Griffith, The Rev. R. D. Richardson, The Rev. C. F. Russell, The Rev. A. E. N. Simms, The Rev. Prof. N. Sykes, The Rev. Canon R. B. Tollinton, Mr. H. F. Walker, Miss Dorothy Ward.

All other members of the Council (whose names are printed on the cover of the *Modern Churchman*) continue to serve.

Ten members of the Council are to be elected this year, and the nominations of candidates must reach the Secretary not later than March 1st. The names must be proposed and seconded by members of the Union. If more than ten nominations are received, voting papers will be sent to all members of the Union.

The Church House,
Westminster,
London, S.W.1.

T. J. WOOD.